

No. 1500

NEW YORK, MARCH 2, 1927

Price 8 Cents

PLUCK AND LUCK

LITTLE RED CLOUD THE BOY INDIAN CHIEF

By An Old Scout

AND OTHER STORIES



The silver-haired old man brought out Laura and Lena. When Singing Bird saw Little Red Cloud gaze at Lena as he did she became furious with jealousy. She snatched up a tomahawk and flew at her.

PLUCK AND LUCK

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LITTLE RED CLOUD

THE BOY INDIAN CHIEF

By AN OLD SCOUT.

CHAPTER I.—The Tragedy of the Border.

A few years before the war of Secession broke out a frontiersman's cabin stood on the west bank of the upper Missouri. It was a double log cabin, and before it stood an immense old oak under the shade of which played a little five-year-old boy. The mother sat in the door, and knit and sang as she rocked a cradle with her foot. Suddenly the crack of a rifle was heard in the woods below the cabin. The little fellow sprang up from his play, crying out: "Papa is comin'—papa is comin'!" and ran off in the direction that the sound of the shot had come. The happy mother looked after the little fellow, and smiled as she thought of how she would see him a few moments later perched upon his father's shoulders. Five, ten, fifteen minutes passed, and then she laid down her knitting and listened. She could hear nothing.

"I wonder what William could have shot that keeps him back so long?" she said to herself.

She walked back to the house, went inside, and tried to devote herself to some little household duty. Suddenly she snatched up her bonnet, shut and locked the cabin door—her little babe inside—and hurried away into the woods. She ran with all her speed till she had gone as far as she thought the sound of the rifle had come, and then stopped.

"Harry! Harry!" she called, at the top of her voice.

No childish voice responded, and then she called out:

"Will! Oh, Will!"

Only the echo of her voice came back to her. "Heavens!" she moaned. "My child is lost! Save him!" and she sank down at the foot of the tree like one almost bereft of her strength.

But she was up again in a moment, and bounded away like a deer, going toward the cabin. She ran as if for her life, and when she reached the little home, she seized a large cow's horn, which hung against the wall near the door, and blew three short, sharp blasts with it. Then she waited a couple of minutes and blew three more blasts, after which she hung it up, and took the cooing babe in her arms, pressing it to her heart as if afraid it, too, might get lost in the woods. By and by she heard footsteps approaching, and run-

ning to the door, she saw her husband coming with his rifle and the carcass of a deer.

"What's the matter, Mary?" he asked, as he laid the dead game down on the ground by the door and looked up at the pallid face of his wife.

"Will—Harry—is—lost!"

William Harper stood like one suddenly turned to stone, and stared at his wife as if he had not quite caught the full meaning of her words.

"Which way did he go?" he gasped, finding his voice at last.

"Down that way. He thought he heard your rifle and went to meet you a half hour ago."

"I'll run down that way and soon bring him back," he said, and the next moment he was off.

He went over the same ground the mother had gone, calling the name of his little boy at the top of his voice. But, like the mother, he got only the echo of his voice for reply. Then he turned his footsteps toward the river to see if the little fellow wandered that way. Ere he had gone two hundred yards he came upon the trail of five Indians, and followed it to the water's edge. There he found that they had taken a canoe and gone away in it.

"They have stolen him!" he said to himself, the tones of his voice telling how much his heart was wrung. "I can't tell whether they went up or down stream, or merely crossed over to the other side. I have been the best of friends to them, and now, if they have taken him, my vengeance shall be the most deadly of any that ever pursued them."

He went back to the cabin to tell his wife. She saw him coming and gave a wild, piercing scream. He rushed to her side, but she was in a death-like swoon. To throw water in her face and chafe her face and hands was all he could do. Strong man as he was he could not keep back the tears that came into his eyes to blind him. He wept and yet worked to restore her to consciousness. At last he succeeded, and then her heartrending cries utterly unmanned him.

"Go! Go! Go!" she cried. "Follow his trail till you find him!"

"I will go to the nearest Indian village," said the father, "and tell them that our little boy has been taken away. The chief will cause him to be given up if any one in his tribe has taken him."

"Go quickly, then!" cried the mother; "don't worry about me. I can take care of myself."

He took up his rifle, kissed his wife and child, and hurried away to the river, where lay his canoe. To row across the river and seek for the trail of the Indians on the other side was the first move he made. It did not take him long to satisfy himself that they had not landed there.

"They must have gone up the river," he said.

Crossing back over to his side of the river, he tied up his canoe and started on foot to visit the Indian villages up in the wild regions of the Yellowstone and upper Missouri. Days and weeks passed, and every Indian village he could hear of was visited, and yet no tidings of his child could he hear. Then he turned his weary footsteps toward his cabin home. He tramped through the almost trackless forest, and finally came to familiar landmarks, which told him that he would soon see his wife and innocent babe. On reaching the clearing, which his own strong hands had made, he stopped and gazed around like one half dreaming. He could not bring himself to realize that his home was no more, and wife and child gone.

"It was not an accident," he said to himself, "else she would have left some token to tell me where she had gone. It is the work of fiends. From this hour I am myself a fiend. Be they alive or dead I will be the Nemesis of the redmen who did this thing. Hear me, Thou Ruler of Heaven and earth! Hear me, dead ashes of my home—I swear by all that as long as my eyes can see, my ears hear, my feet run, my hands strike, my life shall be one of vengeance!"

CHAPTER II.—The Two Renegades—the Boy Chief.

On a bright June morning two men met on the banks of the Yellowstone in the bend below the pillar of the White Elk. One was short in stature, but muscular and active. His face wore a sinister expression, and he had a sort of hunted look about him. Even at a casual glance one could see that he was a man who held human life as of but little value to any one but himself. The other, his companion, was several inches taller, of light, sinewy build and evidently very active and strong.

"See hyer, Bill Gregg," the tall man said. "Yer can't make me believe such a yarn as that. Why, Will Harper was wiped out mor'n ten years ago."

"Jesso, Zack," said the short man, leaning on his rifle, and squirting a mouthful of tobacco juice on the leaves at his feet. "So I thought; but my eyes ain't foolin' me yet. I ain't so old but what I kin tell ef I knows a man. I tell yer I saw Will Harper yesterday up by White Elk pillar, an' he weren't dead, nuther. Old Deer Slayer said he killed him, but he can't show his scalp."

"Whar's he bin all them ten years, I'd like ter know?" Zack Allen asked.

"I dunno. He ain't bin seen till yesterday. But many braves has bin wiped out, yer know, an' I'm thinkin' as how he has bin playin' 'er game."

"Game! Er dead man don't play no games, Bill Gregg. Yer saw his ghost."

"I don't believe in no ghosts!"

"Whar did yer see 'im?"

"Up by the White Elk pillar. I was hid behind

er boulder an' he come by with er rifle in his hand. I knowed him ter onct. He is older than he were when his boy was took. Ghosts don't grow old."

"Whar did he go?"

"Over to ther hills thar."

"Kin we trail 'im?"

"Look hyer, Zack. Ez long as he lets us erlone it ud pay ter let him erlone. Harper is rank pizen."

"But will he let us alone?"

"I dunno. He ain't killed us yit. It's ther redskins he's arter."

"But we are with 'em, an——"

"Never mind that, Zack," said Gregg. "It's been thirtin years since his cabin were burned, an' ef he ain't bin doin' nothin' in ten years he ain't goin' to do nothin' now. But we'll see old Deer Slayer and tell him he ain't got Harper's scalp."

"He'll laugh at yer."

"Mebbe he'll see Harper an' find out for himself. They called 'im 'Swift Hand' 'cause he were so quick with his hands. Shoot me for a catamount ef I kin see whar he's bin all this time. If ther Blackfeet meet 'im they'll wipe 'im out. We've got ter git over t'other side o' ther river, for Gray Wolf's band is er comin' ter see ther White Elk. Old Yellow Bear isn't ready for so many, an' 'll get whipped out o' his moccasins."

The two men were renegades who had sought refuge among the Indians to escape the penalty of their crimes among the whites along the border. The Indians had received them as allies who were wicked as themselves. But they were not always eager to go into battle, either against the soldiers or other tribes, hence they went over to the north side of the Yellowstone to escape taking a hand in the probable fight when the two bands met. The White Elk was a singular source of a strange superstition among all the tribes of the Northwest. There is a place on the banks of the Yellowstone where the high range of rocky hills comes to a sudden termination.

Just one hundred yards from the end of the range of hills stands an immense stone column, or pillar, towering perpendicularly more than one hundred and fifty feet. It was first seen by Colonels Lewis and Clarke in 1806, when they led an exploring party up into the then unknown Northwest. Colonel Clarke cut his initials on the rock, and they are to be seen there to this day. The Indians have all sorts of legends about it, and one is that at odd times an immense white elk appears on the peak, and the warrior or hunter, who is lucky enough to see it, is sure to have good luck on the expedition he is going on at the time he saw it.

Many white hunters had seen the great white elk on the peak of the column, but as they were not quite so superstitious as the Indians, they endeavored to account for it. There are no stated times for it to appear. Hunting parties sometimes encamped at the base of the pillar for a month or so, waiting for the elk to appear to give them good luck. It has been known that a war party of Blackfeet, Crows or Sioux, after waiting there a month to get a glimpse of "heap good elk," would give up the expedition because the elk had not appeared to them. Of late years the Indians had reported that a white man, with long white hair and beard, had been seen about the

face appearing and disappearing as if by magic. Let some of them had talked with him and received kindness at his hands. Such were the superstitions of the Indians in regard to the White Elk when the two renegades, Gregg and Allen, crossed over the river to avoid being on hand when the two war parties should meet near the famous pillar.

They knew that bad blood existed between the two tribes on account of the old chief of the Sioux refusing to join the Blackfeet in a war against the white settlers on the border. If they met near the pillar there would be a fight sure, and the two renegades made haste to get out of the way. The Sioux were led by their old chief, who had won more battles for his tribe than any chief of whom they had any tradition. But the old warrior had seen his best days, as sixty years had rolled by since his birth. He had survived all his children save one, a beautiful girl just seventeen years old. Her name was Singing Bird, and many of the bravest warriors of the tribe had paid court to her, hoping to win her as a wife. But she turned a deaf ear to all of them, only to listen to the wooing of a youth of about eighteen years of age, who had not yet taken a scalp. He was brave, bold and daring, and she had faith in his future. She loved him, and that was enough for her to know.

The very day that the two renegades crossed over the river and hid themselves among the rocks the two bands of Indians came in sight of the pillar of the White Elk. The Sioux made a rush to get first on the ground and the Blackfeet did the same. Of course there was a fight, and as the Blackfeet outnumbered the Sioux almost two to one, the latter had to fight hard to keep from losing the day. Little Red Cloud was everywhere in the thickest of the fight. But for him the day would have been lost. He held a position till the other warriors came to his side and drove back the enemy. The Blackfeet retreated, and Indian-like, made no resistance after their retreat began. It was a bloody fight. Many good warriors had fallen, and among them the old chief who had led his people so long. But when the victorious warriors gathered around the camp fire at the base of the great stone pillar that night it was found that Little Red Cloud had taken seven scalps. No other warrior could show more than four, and only two could show that many. The old warriors looked at him and grunted. They were not pleased, for it was a rule in the tribe that when a chief fell in battle the warrior who could show the most scalps taken in that fight was entitled to succeed him. He was but a boy yet in years, and old warriors who bore many scars received in battle did not relish the idea of having a boy for a chief. But there was no avoiding the rule of the tribe. He had fairly won the place, and they gave it to him under the shadow of the great pillar of the elk.

CHAPTER III.—The Old Man of the Hills.

On the evening following the battle in which Little Red Cloud won the place of chief the Sioux warriors sat around the camp-fires and talked in low tones about the events of the day. The boy chief sat on a stone near by gazing at the flickering light before him. Suddenly he rose to his feet and stalked away toward the river bank,

where he stopped and stood at the brink, his arms folded across his breast.

"I am chief now," he muttered to himself, "and my warriors will follow and obey my call. Yet I know that I am not an Indian. My skin 'neath my hunting shirt is not the color of theirs, though my face is tanned nearly as dark as the oldest of them. They hate the whites and I do not. They want to war with the whites and I do not. Gregg and Allen are bad white men who cannot live with their people, and that is why they desire to have the Sioux go to war with them. I hope the White Elk will not come and tell us to go to war against them."

"The young chief is wise," said a grave voice behind him, and looking around the boy chief beheld in the dim starlight the face and form of an old paleface about whom the redmen had of late become so superstitious.

His hair and beard were long and almost snow white.

"The young chief is wise," repeated the old man. "The Indian cannot cope with him in battle. Let the redmen remain at peace with their white brothers, and give up all the white captives they may have in their villages. Then the White Elk will appear on yonder pillar of rock and point the way for them to go."

There was something about the old man that inspired the boy chief with unquestionable confidence in him. He seemed to share in the superstition of his people in regard to him.

"Many years have made the paleface with the white beard wiser than the medicine men of the redmen," he said. "Little Red Cloud will listen to his voice. He will not go to war with the whites. But the warriors of the tribe are eager for the fray. Their tomahawks and scalping knives are sharpened to cut deep."

"Let them beware. They will be driven still farther toward the setting sun, and their warriors will fall like leaves of the trees in autumn. Listen, chief, and remember my words. When the White Elk appears good luck will follow the expedition that starts out on the day it is seen. But not if they start against the whites, for the elk is white itself. It means bad luck if you go against the whites. I have spoken. I have been with the White Elk for these many years."

"The young chief listens. His ears drink in the words of the paleface, and—"

The young chief stopped and looked around, as if half suspecting the presence of a listener. The old white man glanced around, too, but did not see anything to cause him to think he was being watched. But a moment or two later they both moved away from the spot, as if in doubt as to the wisdom of longer remaining there. The young chief returned to the camp-fires, and the old man started off toward the hills beyond the pillar of the White Elk. As he was passing a clump of bushes, two white men sprang out and confronted him.

"Where do you live?" one of them asked.

"In the hills back there, Bill Gregg," was the reply.

"Blast it, man!" exclaimed the renegade, "who are you, and how'd yer know my name?"

"I have known you and Zack Allen ever since you came to the Sioux for refuge," replied the old man.

"But who are you?" Gregg demanded.

"I am the old man of the hills!" was the reply. "What have you been saying to that boy? Is he a traitor to the redmen?"

"No. He is the chief of the Sioux. The old chief was slain in the fight today, and Little Red Cloud showing more scalps than any other warrior, was made chief in his stead. He didn't cross over the river to get away from the battle."

"By the Great Elk!" exclaimed Gregg. "He is not an Indian. He is a white boy who was stolen from his home thirteen years ago. He isn't but eighteen years old now."

The old man started. The words of the renegade seemed to move him as he was never moved before. He whirled upon Gregg, and seizing him by the arm with a vise-like grip, said:

"Tell me what you know about that boy, and it will be well with you. Where did they get him?"

"Down the river somewhere."

"Who brought him to the village?"

"The warriors who brought him in are dead—killed by the Blackfeet."

"Did they bring anyone else with him?" the old man asked.

"No."

"No child—a babe—or mother?"

"No."

"Did you ever know whose child he was?"

"No."

"You lie, you renegade, you lie! A five years old child would tell his name! Tell me the truth or I'll hurl you into the river!"

Gregg sought to free himself from the old man's grasp, but the next moment he felt himself lifted off his feet, as if by a giant, and hurled into the river, making a splash that caused every warrior at the camp-fires to spring to his feet.

CHAPTER IV.—The Two Renegades' Treason.

The moment Gregg came to the surface he looked to see if the old man was still there on the river bank. But he had gone away, and the renegade swam out as quickly as possible.

"Throw me into the river, eh?" he muttered to himself. "Let him try it once more. If I don't ventilate him like a wasp's nest, my name ain't Bill Gregg, that's all. He knows something about Little Red Cloud, an' wants to know more. Just let me get a chance at 'im again, an' I'll tell him more than he ever knew before, I——"

He suddenly darted into a clump of bushes, as he heard footsteps approaching, and held his hunting knife ready for instant use. As he crouched there he saw who it was—his brother renegade, Zack Allen.

"Hello, Zack!" he called, in low tones. "Where did he go?"

"Inter ther cave under ther rocks," replied Allen. "Lord, why didn't I shoot 'im when I had ther chance?"

"Just wait till I git a chance at 'im. I'm a rattler—fourteen rattles and a button—an' when I strike I let my pizen go straight in. He throwed me inter ther river like I was nothin' but a baby, but wait—wait till I strike. Did you trail 'im to ther cave?"

"Yes, an' he walked right in as if he lived there."

"There's two or three places to go in, you know."

"Yes. He went inter ther one next ther White Elk pillar."

"Zack, I'm goin' ter lay for 'im till I git 'im. He's my meat."

"I'm with yer, pard," said Zack.

"Come on, then. We must find a good place ter lay for 'im in," and the two renegades started off in the direction of the great hill of stone under which the old man had disappeared after dousing Gregg.

They soon reached the spot, where an immense fissure in the rock extended from the ground up to a distance of one hundred feet or more. Stopping before that Allen said in a half whisper:

"He went in here."

Gregg looked around and fixed his eye upon a couple of boulders which lay some thirty feet back from the entrance to the cave.

"We'll camp behind them, Zack," he said, pointing to the boulders, "an' wipe 'im out when he shows himself."

The two renegades stationed themselves behind the boulders, and proceeded to settle down for a long wait, in order to get a chance at the man they wanted to wipe out. On hearing the splash in the water Little Red Cloud had hastened back to the river suspecting that something was wrong. He reached the spot in time to see Gregg climbing up out of the water, and hid himself behind a tree for a moment or two to see what the trouble was. From what he heard Gregg say in his rage, he quickly surmised that the old man had pitched him into the river. Then Allen came and he heard what passed between them. To follow and shadow them after that was a natural sequence, and in a little while he found them intrenched behind the two boulders, intent on the cowardly assassination of the old man as he came out of the cave. That was something he would not permit, because the old man had interested him, besides showing him unusual friendship since he first met him. Accordingly he marched boldly up to the boulders, and said:

"You want to kill the Old Man of the Hills. If you do I make my warriors burn you at the stake. I have spoken," and with that he turned away and started to go back.

Enraged at being thus spoken to by one whom he regarded as a mere boy Bill Gregg made up his mind quickly to wipe him out, and thus free himself from his rule as a chief.

"Hold on, chief," he said, going toward him. "I want ter see you."

The young chief stopped and waited for him to come up. He saw the gleam of a knife in his hand in the starlight, and instantly suspected treachery. Being thus on his guard, he was too quick for him when the renegade made a stroke at his throat with his knife, and dodged it, at the same time drawing his tomahawk and giving the Sioux war-whoop. The next moment the young chief had him on the defensive, forcing him back upon Allen, who called out:

"Run for it, Bill! the braves are comin'!"

Making a sudden break, the two renegades sought shelter in the very cave where they had thought to corner the Old Man of the Hills. Little Red Cloud pursued them to the mouth of the cave and there stopped. When his braves came up he told them what had happened.

"Gregg and Allen are enemies of the Sioux," he proclaimed. "Let the Sioux braves take their scalps wherever they find them."

They stationed half a dozen braves at the mouth of the cave to guard it, and the rest went away to meet around the camp-fires. In the meantime Gregg and Allen were not in a happy frame of mind. They had suddenly lost the refuge which the Sioux had given them for years, and now they had heard the young chief proclaim them as enemies and offer their scalps to any warrior who could take them.

"Bill, it's all up with us," said Allen, as he heard the young chief denounce them by name.

"Come on," said Gregg. "We must get outen hyer afore the moon rises," and he led the way through a passage where he could not see an inch before his nose. Allen followed him, and after going what seemed to them half a mile or so they came to an opening in the rock which looked out upon the river, but some twenty feet above the water.

A shelving rock protruded somewhat, and they stepped out on that. The precipice towered above them almost perpendicularly.

"We are saved," said Gregg. "We can jump down inter ther water an' swim across to the other side."

"So we can," returned Allen. "We are in good luck after all."

"Yes. Hark, I hear canoes," and they stood still to listen.

They waited five minutes or more, and then saw three large canoes coming directly toward the rock on which they stood.

"Hyers the tunnel!" they heard a voice in the nearest canoe say.

"Yes, hyer it is," said another. "All the soldiers in ther West can't find us hyer. Duck yer heads now, an' come straight in. I'll strike a light when we get in far enough."

To their great surprise, the three canoes, which seemed to have seven or eight men in each, passed under the rock and disappeared from view.

CHAPTER V.—The Outlaws—The Escape of the Girls.

"Pard, they're white men," said Allen, as soon as the sound of the oars had died away under the rock.

"Yes, an' outlaws at that. I reckon they're Raymond's band."

"Me, too, pard. Lord, why didn't we sing out to 'em!"

"They're comin' out again some time, I reckon." "Yes, but we ain't got nothin' ter eat with us, an' as they are hidin' from ther soldiers they won't come out for er week, mebber."

"That's so. Hang it, we kin both swim. Let's jump in an' follow the tunnel under the rock. We can swim anywhere a canoe can go."

"Waal, let's jump in an' try it."

They each wore a knife and revolver—things they would not part with under any circumstances, and yet they knew that such weapons would have a tendency to pull them toward the bottom when they plunged into the water. But they made the leap and struck the water with a loud splash.

"This way, pard," said Gregg, swimming under the tunnel.

Allen followed, and they both swam straight ahead till they struck against a wall of rock in the darkness.

"Let us follow this wall," said Gregg, as he felt along the rocky side of the tunnel.

In a little while they came to a sharp curve, round which they turned, and then saw several lights ahead.

"Thar they are! Hello, pards!"

The men with the torches were amazed at hearing the call, and waited to see who they were. Gregg and Allen swam up to a pebbly beach in a large chamber, where three large canoes were drawn up out of the water. On the beach over a score of villainous looking men, armed to the teeth, stood awaiting them. There were also two young girls there who were evidently prisoners.

"Who are you?" demanded a man who seemed to be the leader of the band.

"We are white men who want to join your band. The redskins are after our hair," and as he spoke Bill Gregg climbed up out of the water and confronted the captain.

"Why, that's Bill Gregg!" exclaimed a man in the crowd; "an' t'other's Zack Allen! I know 'em, cap'n."

"Ah! you've been with the Sioux a long time," said the captain. "What are you leaving them for?"

"We had a little difficulty with the Boy Chief an' had ter leave."

"Well, you can mess with us," said the captain. "I am Raymond. The soldiers are looking for us for some work done the other day. Come on, boys, to the banquet hall," and he led the way through a narrow passage into another chamber where were rude tables and seats.

From one of the canoes several bags of plunder were taken and placed in a corner of the cavern. Then a number of jugs and tin cups were produced from some of the many recesses of the place and set upon the table. The men crowded around to get drinks of liquor from the jugs, while the two young girls were assigned a place in a recess, where skins and blankets were spread before them.

"Now, see here, girls," said the captain, approaching them; "I don't see why you should be crying all the time, when no harm is going to be done you at all."

"It isn't that, sir," said the eldest of the two girls, who seemed to be some twenty years of age. "It isn't that at all. It's the harm that's already been done that grieves us. Our dear old uncle has been cruelly murdered and his property taken. Oh, it was cruel—cruel!" and their tears burst forth afresh, and their sobs became almost incessant.

"Yes, that was bad enough, but it couldn't be helped," said the outlaw captain. "You can get over the loss of your uncle, and I'll see that his property is restored to you again. We are obliged to hold you as prisoner for a while to make sure of our own safety. By and by you can go free again, if you wish. So dry your tears and try to make yourselves comfortable and happy."

He left the two girls after that and rejoined his men at the table, where he asked Gregg for the story of his trouble with the Sioux. The renegade told him quite a story, at which the men

laughed and filled up their cups as if to drink to the confusion of the Sioux. They kept on drinking till the scene became pandemonium—an orgie of demon outlaws. Long after midnight some of them began to drop down in drunken stupor. Gregg and Allen went down among them. The captain and others followed till not one of the entire band could keep on his feet.

"Oh, Lena," whispered the elder to the younger sister, "they are all dead drunk! Why cannot we make our escape from them?"

"How can we, Laura?" the other asked.

"By taking the canoes and finding our way out."

"There's nothing to hinder, if we could only do it," returned Lena.

Laura rose to her feet, and walked boldly over to where the drunken outlaws were sleeping off the fumes of their potations. Not one of them stirred. She stooped down and took a revolver from the belt of one of the men. Giving that to her sister, who seemed to be a girl of seventeen, she stooped and secured another.

"Come away," she whispered, turning and leading the way back toward the chamber from whence the whole band had moved on the arrival of Gregg and Allen. Taking up one of the lanterns she led the way till the chamber was reached, thence into the great cavern, where they wandered around till they found the pebbly beach where the canoes were.

"Here are three canoes," said Laura. "It would be foolish for us to go and leave any of them behind us, for they could then follow us."

They had no trouble in making them fast together, and then Laura got into the third one, with a paddle in her hands. Lena held the line and towed the other two, while Laura got down on her knees and began to propel the canoe through the water. In a little while Laura exclaimed:

"We are saved, Lena! I feel the fresh air of the river! Hold your head down low now!"

Both girls ducked their heads and the canoes passed out from under a low hanging ledge of rocks into the broad moonlight of the bosom of the river.

"Oh, I could shout for joy!" exclaimed Lena. "They can't follow us, for they have no canoes."

"Turn the other two canoes loose, Lena," said Laura. "We can go faster then. We have use for but one now."

Lena cut the other two loose, and they were borne away on the current of the river. Laura then plied her paddle with an energy born of a determination to save herself and sister from the peril that menaced them.

CHAPTER VI.—The Rescue of the Girls—The Old Man of the Hills.

The two girls had gone perhaps a quarter of a mile down the river, when several dark objects in the water attracted their attention. They both looked at them, and then both made a discovery at the same instant, for they gasped out:

"Indians!"

At the same instant a hand caught hold of the canoe and the tufted head of a Blackfeet warrior was raised up to the edge.

"Ugh! where paleface maidens goin'?" he asked. Laura answered him and said:

"We are going down the river to our home."

"No—come with Injuns," said the savage.

Just then two more warriors laid hold of the canoe, and Laura felt it being drawn to the north side of the river. Suddenly she recollected the two revolvers she and Lena had brought away from the outlaws' cave. They were lying in the bottom of the canoe. In another instant she had one in each hand, cocked and aimed at the heads in the water.

"Let go of this canoe or I'll fire," she cried in determined tones.

"Ugh! Maiden got pistol," said one of the warriors, laughing. "She will kill us all."

The other laughed, and one of them gave the canoe a jerk to throw her off her balance as she stood up. Crack! Crack! Two shots rang out over the water, and the crags echoed them far and wide up and down the river. Two warriors released their hold on the canoe and sank out of sight.

"Ugh! Me take paleface maiden with us," said another warrior, laying a hand on the canoe.

Crack went the revolver, and the redskin sank out of sight with a bullet in his brain. Then the others realized that the girl had killed three of their number, and also that she had the advantage, as they had no arms with them in the water save their knives.

"Ugh! Don't shoot! Injun go away," said the one nearest the canoe when he thought she was aiming at him.

"Go away, then, or I'll fire again," she said, still holding the deadly revolvers pointed in their direction.

They did swim away, and she laid the weapons down in the bottom of the canoe, and took up the paddle again.

"Thank heavens, they are gone!" said Lena, breathing freer.

They turned toward the south bank of the river and rowed with all their might. The canoe went through the water like a thing of life. But two canoes behind came faster, as five stalwart warriors in each plied the oars with all their might, and gained rapidly on the two girls.

"Stop!" said one of the warriors, "or Indian shoot!"

But they paid no attention to the threat. They rowed with all the strength they could command. The girls' canoe touched the bank just as the foremost of the pursuers touched land. Laura sprang out, a revolver in each hand, crying out:

"Jump ashore, Lena!" and then fired.

A yell told her that her aim had been true, and the savage who got the bullet tumbled into the water. Just as she was going to fire again, four shots from a clump of bushes right at the bow of her canoe startled her. Four death yells told the story of their effect. But she did not stop to see who her deliverer was. She blazed away again, and with such deadly effect that the surviving redskins sprang into the water and dived out of the way. Then she sprang ashore with Lena. The form of a young Sioux Indian stood before them.

"Who are you?" she demanded.

"I am Little Red Cloud, chief of the Sioux, and the friend of the paleface maidens," replied the Indian.

Let us now return to the silver-haired old man who had so astonished the renegade by hurling him into the river, and follow him as he stalked away from the water's edge. A few strides took him out of range of the camp-fires, and brought him under the shadow of the great rock. There he stopped to listen for sounds from either camp or river, to see if the splash in the water had attracted attention. But everything was quiet, and he bared his head to the cool night air, as if something had taken place to make him feel uncomfortably warm. As he stood there and watched and listened he heard the soft footsteps of someone who seemed to be trying to creep up on him. In another moment he became convinced that he had been followed by the man who was the companion of the one he had thrown into the river. No sooner had that fact dawned upon his mind than he turned and sauntered off along the base of the rock, a distance of two hundred yards or more. There he turned and entered the mouth of a cave—or rather a great crack or fissure in the rock. He made his way along the passage till he came to where it joined another. Following that one he soon emerged into the open air near the spot where he was standing when he discovered that Allen had followed him. He stood there listening again, and in a few minutes was joined by a white hunter clad in buckskin hunting shirt and leggings.

"Ah! Eric, you have come at last," said the old man, grasping his hand.

"Yes, I am here," said the newcomer. "Are they about?"

"Yes, they are both here. But come, you must be both tired and hungry," and he led the way toward the mouth of the cave from which he had just emerged.

After going about a hundred feet the old man stopped and felt along the wall with both hands till he struck an iron rod that seemed to project from the rock. Pressing hard against that a door opened by a boulder turning slowly round. They passed into the opening, and the boulder swung round into place again. Then he struck a light and lit a rude lantern, revealing a large chamber containing skins, blankets and a rude table.

"Sit down now and I'll get you something to eat," the old man said, going to a ledge or shelf of rock and bringing forward dried buffalo meat enough for a dozen men to eat.

Winston helped himself till his hunger was satisfied, and then took a tin cup and went to a spring in a corner, where he quenched his thirst in a draught of cold water.

"Where are the renegades?" Winston asked when he returned from the spring.

"They are watching one of the entrances to this cave to shoot me down as I go out."

"Ten thousand furies, man!" gasped the hunter. "Let's nab 'em and mete out justice to them in here."

"I am willing—yea, anxious to do so," said the old man.

They concealed themselves and heard Little Red Cloud, the young chief, tell his braves how the two renegades had tried to assassinate him, and how they had fled for refuge to the cave under the rocks.

"They are in the cave, too," whispered the old man. "Come on. We have them in our power!"

They hastened back to the cave, and made their way into the passage which they believed the two renegades had taken refuge in. In a little while they heard them talking in the passage. They followed them, getting closer and closer to them every minute, till they saw them reach an opening in the face of the rock fronting on the river. Neither had ever seen that opening before, and while they were thinking about what they should do they heard a loud splash in the water.

"Ten thousand furies!" gasped Winston; "they have fallen into the river! They will both be drowned, and justice will be cheated!"

CHAPTER VII.—After the Renegades.

"Eric Winston, they have escaped us," said the old man, as he heard the splash as the two renegades sprang into the river.

"Yes, so they have. But I am tempted to jump in after them.

"That would do no good. You can't trail a man in the water on a dark night."

"You are right. Oh, what a bitter disappointment!"

"So it is, but they can't go very far before morning, and we may be able to get on their trail by sunrise."

"Shall we wait till then?"

"Yes. We'd better go back and tell Little Red Cloud that it's useless to keep a guard at the mouth of the cave all night."

They started on the return trip. The old man lit a small lantern he had with him, and thus was enabled to make his way much easier along a passage he had never known before. After going some two or three hundred feet the old man came to a sudden stop and listened. They both heard voices. But they were too indistinct for them to hear what was being said. Finally they came to a crevice but a few inches wide in the wall of rock, through which the sound of voices came very distinctly. Then the old man whispered to Winston and asked:

"Do you understand?"

"Yes, fully."

"Come away, then," and they both retraced their footsteps back to the passage they had just left.

"You understand that Raymond, the outlaw, and his band have a rendezvous under there, and that Gregg and Allen are with them?"

"Yes," Winston replied. "I heard Gregg explain how he got in there by seeing their canoes go into the tunnel under the rock."

"Yes. We can understand why they sprang into the water now."

"They have two girl prisoners there with them. We ought to do something to rescue them."

"True. We must be careful. Twenty-five white men, well armed, is a bad crowd to attack. We had better go and see Little Red Cloud, and see how many warriors he can muster to make an attack on them."

They made their way out to the open air, and then went in search of the young chief. Little Red Cloud was glad to see the old man, but looked at Eric Winston inquiringly till he was told who he was.

"Gregg and Allen want to get the scalp of old

man with the white hair," he remarked to the old man.

"Yes, I know. You forbade them, and they tried to take yours, after which they fled into the cave to escape your wrath. I know all."

The young chief was astonished at the knowledge of the old man about what had taken place, and said:

"The Old Man of the Hills is wise. He knows everything. He speaks the truth. The Sioux will take their scalps when they find them."

"Yes, you can do that, but the band is well armed, and composed of very desperate men. We don't know anything about the way they got there. We'll have to find out, and then arrange a plan of attack."

"Yes," said the young chief. "We'll find out, and then go in there and take their scalps."

They went back toward the camp-fires, near the great pillar of stone, and there Little Red Cloud said he would take a canoe and go down the stream and see if he could find the tunnel through which the outlaws had entered the cave.

"I will go with you," said the old man.

"And me, too," said Winston.

They entered a good-sized canoe and shoved off. Ere they struck the front of the great rock they heard the sound of paddles on their left. In a little while they saw a canoe coming from the north bank, and instantly knew that they were not Sioux, for at that time there were none known to be on that side of the river. The canoe had three warriors in it, and it came up alongside Little Red Cloud's canoe.

"We come see Cap'en Raymond," said the Blackfeet warrior, as the two canoes touched.

Instantly the old man spoke up and said:

"Come with us. We are going to him, too."

"Ugh! Good!" said the warrior.

Winston and the young chief kept silent, divining the object of the old man. The old man turned the canoe and rowed ashore, landing the entire party, saying to the Blackfeet warriors:

"Come," and led the way right into the camp of the Sioux warriors, every one of whom sprang to his feet on seeing their foes thus come into their midst.

"The Blackfeet warriors are spies," said the old man. "They come over to meet the band of whites under the rocks. They are prisoners."

The three warriors were dumfounded, and for the moment did not know what to say or do. The Sioux warriors burst out laughing when they understood the trick that had been played on the three Blackfeet braves and began to dance around them taunting them unmercifully. Suddenly they made a break for freedom, striking right and left with their tomahawks. In just two minutes the three Blackfeet warriors were killed and scalped, their bodies thrown into the river and their canoe taken possession of.

"We will go again and see if we can find a way to get at the outlaws," said the old man to the young chief, and a few minutes later they once more embarked in a canoe to go down in front of the great precipice on the water's side.

CHAPTER VIII.—The Fight in the Water.

It did not take them long to get down in front of the great rock. In a few minutes they were dumfounded at seeing three large canoes filled

with Blackfeet warriors coming right down upon them.

"We must get into the water and cut holes in the bottom of their canoes," whispered the old man, "and then swim below till we can land."

They let themselves down into the water easily, and drew their knives, ready for the work of scuttling the canoes. It was not difficult to cut through the bottom of a birch bark canoe. One stroke was enough.

"Ugh! Canoe sink!" grunted one of the braves.

Little Red Cloud cut through one, and in doing so cut the foot of one of the rowers. Instantly the alarm was given just as Winston scuttled his. In less than two minutes all three canoes had sunk, and the water was alive with redskins trying to swim to some place of safety. Little Red Cloud was seized by one of them, but he saved himself by a quick use of his knife. At last he swam away down the current, intending to hurry back to his braves and get enough of them together to capture some of the Blackfeet. But he had to swim down some distance ere he found a landing place, which was on a shelving rock which projected out into the water about ten feet or so. On that he climbed and stood up to listen. He heard someone coming directly toward him, and a few moments later the head and shoulders of a stalwart Indian appeared almost at his feet in the water. He knew in an instant that he was not a Sioux, and stood still for him to rise out of the water. In another instant the newcomer was on his feet beside him. He was a big fellow—almost a head taller than the young chief, and broad-shouldered in proportion. The big warrior looked hard at him in the dim starlight and then muttered:

"Sioux dog—me take scalp!"

Little Red Cloud saw that his enemy was stronger than he was, and that he would have to be careful not to let him get a grip on him. Little Red Cloud made a desperate charge and wounded the big fellow on the left shoulder. That angered him.

"Ugh! Me take Sioux chief's scalp now!" and he hurled himself upon him like an avalanche and both went down on the rocks, the young chief underneath him.

The next instant the Blackfeet had his scalp-lock in his hand. By a quick, dexterous movement Little Red Cloud plunged his knife into the Blackfeet's side up to the hilt. The shock paralyzed him for a moment or two, and it was easy for the young chief to throw him off, which he did. Then he went for his scalp, and in less than ten seconds he had torn it from his head. His triumphant war-whoop rang out on the night air to be defiantly answered by one from the other side of the river. The war-whoop had told the old man of the hills where the young chief was, and he swam toward him. When he had approached the rock he called to him:

"Little Red Cloud's whoop rang out over the river like the cry of the eagle."

"He has triumphed over his enemy," replied the boy chief.

The old man knew his voice, and proceeded to climb out on the rock.

"Where is Winston?" he asked.

"I don't know," was the reply. "I have not seen him since we went into the water."

"I hope he has not been hurt. Eric! Eric! Where are you?"

"Here—over here!" came back from the other side of the river.

"Come away! Swim over to this side."

Just then the yells of a half dozen warriors were heard over that way, and it seemed as if they were making a rush to capture or kill the man whose voice had located him. Eric Winston came swimming forward with bold strokes, followed by five Blackfeet warriors.

"They were too many for me," he said, as he climbed upon the rock, "so I brought 'em over to divide with you. Ah! the young chief is here. Glad to see you, chief!"

With defiant yells the pursuing Blackfeet began climbing upon the rocks. Little Red Cloud grabbed one of them by the scalp-lock and had it off in a flash ere the brave could raise a hand to defend himself. The Old Man of the Hills ended the career of the next one by a dexterous movement of his knife across his neck. Only one other landed, and Little Red Cloud disposed of him in very short order.

"We have done well tonight, chief," said the silver-haired old man. "We have wiped out many a Blackfeet dog in the water."

"Yes. The White Elk gave us good luck. They won't come over any more tonight."

"We must go back to camp now, as the Sioux braves may come down the river in canoes to see what has happened. Can we climb this rock?"

"We'll see," and they began the ascent, which, though difficult, was finally accomplished, and in a little while they were once more in camp, telling the warriors what had taken place in the water.

CHAPTER IX.—The Council of War—The White Elk.

So far the adventures of the night had been extremely exciting to the young chief. He had found out where the two renegades were, and was determined that they should not escape him. When the moon arose after midnight he was on the lookout. Suddenly he heard pistol shots out on the river, followed by a death yell from an Indian. He could dimly spy two or three canoes going down stream. He ran half a mile down stream till he reached a point whence he could see them again as they passed. To his surprise he saw a canoe with two white girls in it coming toward him, and another full of warriors was hotly pursuing them. To conceal himself in a clump of bushes and wait for the enemy to come up was but the work of a moment or two. Revolver in hand, he crouched down close to the water's edge. The canoe, with six Blackfeet warriors, struck within two feet of him. Quick as a flash he opened fire, giving each warrior a bullet at close range in such rapid succession that they had no time to defend themselves, and in less time than it takes to tell it they had been wiped out.

"The chief of the Sioux has saved us from the Blackfeet," said Laura. "I have been taught that all Indians are bad."

The young chief crossed his arms and said:

"Little Red Cloud has spoken. The Sioux will protect the white maidens and return them to their people."

Then he led the two girls to the camp near the pillar of the White Elk. As soon as they came into the light the young chief saw that Lena was the most beautiful creature he had ever seen in all his life. He gazed at her like one in a dream, and the two sisters looked at him, surprised at his youth and the fact that his features were not those of an Indian. He stepped to Laura's side, and said:

"You are tired and sleepy. You shall sleep, and the warriors of Little Red Cloud will guard you," and he ordered bearskins to be brought to the girls to lie on. They were indeed tired and sleepy, and Laura thanked him as she and Lena lay down on the soft skins before the camp-fire. Other skins were thrown over them, and they were then left alone to rest and sleep. The camp was not disturbed during the night, and so, when the gray dawn appeared, a most profound silence prevailed. As it grew lighter the patches of gray mist became more numerous. As the sun tinted the highest points the scene became one of transcendent beauty, and many of the warriors looked up to admire and reverence the picture. Suddenly someone called out in the Sioux tongue:

"The White Elk! Heap good Elk!"

Every eye was turned toward the top of the pillar known as the pillar of the White Elk. Then they saw, clearly and distinctly outlined against the sky, the form of an immense white elk. It was looking southward, as it always did when seen, with head erect, as if scenting a foe. Every warrior stood spellbound as he gazed up at the magnificent picture, and his heart beat with pride and satisfaction over the good omen thus vouchsafed. Suddenly the mysterious old silver-haired man of the hills appeared before them, unarmed and bareheaded. He pointed up at the great elk and exclaimed:

"The White Elk gives good luck to the Sioux. They will conquer their enemies."

Just then Little Red Cloud raised his tomahawk above his head and gave a war-whoop. Instantly every warrior took up the cry.

CHAPTER X.—The Good Omen of the White Elk.

The scene that followed the appearance of the great White Elk on the peak of the stone pillar a little after sunrise on that morning beggars description. The bright morning sun was gilding the peaks of the highest hills and the tops of the tallest trees. Gray mists were drifting here and there, and in some of them tints of the rainbow were seen as the rays of the sun struck them. But the great figure of an immense white elk on the top of the pillar was the centre of attraction. Every eye was turned upon that, and when the echoes awakened by the shouts of the Sioux warriors, led by their young chief, aroused the two sleeping maidens by the camp-fire, they arose and gazed upon the scene in awestruck wonder. They did not understand the presence of the White Elk any more than the Indians did, and were therefore as much impressed at sight of it as were the dusky warriors themselves.

Little Red Cloud saw them and started toward the camp-fire. But a moment later he turned to speak to the silver-haired old man whom he had

seen pointing up toward the Elk. To his very great astonishment the old man was nowhere to be seen. Then he looked up at the top of the pillar and the great White Elk, too, was gone. The coincidence impressed him deeply, and he stood there gazing toward the great pile of rocks under which he knew the mysterious old man had his home, as if he would fain go and seek him again. But the impulse was but a momentary one. His warriors, believing implicitly in the good omen of the appearance of the White Elk, were eager and enthusiastic. They wanted to put on war paint at once and go forth in quest of the Blackfeet warriors. But he wanted to get the two renegades in his power ere he set out in quest of the ancient foes of his people. Going straight to the place where he saw Laura and Lena, the two maidens whom he had rescued the night before, he greeted them gravely and said:

"We can't find where the maiden came out from under the rocks in the canoe last night. Can you show us where the place is?"

"Yes, I think I would know it," said Laura, "though it was very dark when we went in and came out."

"The heart of Little Red Cloud is glad. He will go in there and kill 'em all."

The young chief hastened to have something to eat given them, after which he had a canoe with six stalwart rowers ready for them. They entered the canoe with them, and in a few minutes they were going down stream in front of the precipitous face of the mountain-spur, which here presented a solid rock precipice from two to four hundred feet high for at least a quarter of a mile.

"There's the place!" cried Laura, pointing to a spot where the rocks overhung the water, making a sort of shelter underneath.

The Indians examined the place, and made the discovery that away back under there was a tunnel that seemed dark and forbidding enough to lead to the infernal regions. They rowed up under the rocks as far as they dared go without a light or guide, and were about to return, when the canoe was seized by unseen hands in the water and capsized. Laura and Lena screamed, woman-like, and the Indians uttered grunts of astonishment at the sudden capsizing of the canoe. The young chief grabbed Lena when he heard her scream, and said to her:

"I can swim, and will save you!"

"Save Laura, too!" she cried.

"I can hold to the canoe," called Laura.

Two stalwart warriors also held to the canoe as if determined to save it for future use. Suddenly one of them felt himself assailed by someone in the semi-darkness, and in a moment he was engaged in a desperate struggle in the water with his assailant. The warrior gave a war-whoop and grappled with his foe.

"He is a white man?" cried Laura, "an outlaw! Kill him! Drown him!"

"I am one, too," said a voice at her side. "We have got you again," and he caught her round the waist.

"Heavens!" she gasped, as the situation dawned upon her. "I am lost!"

"No, you're found ag'in," said the ruffian.

The struggle between the Indian and the other white man was desperate. The Indian proved to be as much at home in the water as the white man. They frequently disappeared under the wa-

ter, but came up again in a death grapple. Suddenly Laura felt the handle of a knife in the belt of the man who was holding her. Quick as a flash she grabbed it, drew it out, and buried it to the hilt in the neck of her captor. The man gave a groan and released his hold on her. The next moment he disappeared under the water.

"Thank heavens!" she gasped, and then began to move along toward the end of the canoe near where the Indian and the white outlaw were still struggling.

She soon got within arm's length of them, and tried to help the redskin. But she could not make sure which was the outlaw. At last she found the white man nearest to her, and gave him two stabs in quick succession.

"Ugh! brave paleface maiden!" exclaimed the warrior.

As the man was about to sink out of sight, the Indian seized him by the hair and deftly scalped him.

CHAPTER XI.—The Rescue of the Sisters.

As Little Red Cloud swam away with Lena he told her to hold on to his buckskin hunting shirt as he would swim out with her. She did so, and by a few bold strokes he reached the sunlight again. But there was no place on that side for them to land. The precipice was perpendicular from the water up and of solid rock. With great good sense he swam down with the current to land at the first accessible spot.

In a little while they came to a shelving rock upon which they could climb. She suggested that they do so, and he yielded to her wish. Seated on the rock some two hundred yards below the spot where the canoe had capsized they gazed up the stream in quest of the others who had been thrown into the water. The heads of three Sioux warriors were seen in the water. But Lena gazed wistfully about in search of her beloved sister, and not seeing her, she began wringing her hands and crying:

"My poor sister is drowned. Oh, why did you not let me drown, too?"

"She is not drowned," said the young chief. "The White Elk gave us good luck today. She is not drowned. You will see her again."

Just then a little white puff of smoke was seen to suddenly show itself above a ledge of rocks on the other side of the river, and a second later the "ping" of a bullet was heard close by the head of the boy Indian chief. It flattened against the wall of rock behind him and fell at Lena's feet. She picked it up, but it was so hot that she quickly dropped it, exclaiming:

"Oh, how hot it is!"

"It is a bullet," said the young chief.

Another shot came, and again did a bullet flatten against the rock behind them.

"We must not stay here!" Lena cried. "You will be killed. We must go away!"

"I am not afraid."

"But I am. Take me away from here. I am going to jump into the water again."

Just at that moment a rifle shot was heard on the cliff above them, and both looking up beheld the silver-haired old man of the hills standing there with a smoking rifle in his hands. Instinctively they glanced across the river toward the

ledge of rocks, and heard a death yell come over the water.

"The enemy of Little Red Cloud is dead," said the old man, and then he disappeared from sight.

"Heap good Elk!" called out a voice, and the next moment the head of an Indian swimming toward them was seen.

Laura was in the water clinging to him.

"Oh, she is saved!" cried Lena, springing to her feet in the wildest joy and clapping her hands like a child.

The Indian swam up to the rock, and the young chief assisted Laura up out of the water. The two sisters were instantly clasped in each other's arms in a loving embrace.

"Oh, we have had such a narrow escape!" cried Lena.

"Yes, but I don't complain. Are you hurt?"

"No, only wet."

"Canoe coming," said the Indian who had brought Laura out.

They looked up the river and saw several canoes coming toward them. They were sent by the other warriors on the banks up about the great pillar. They were taken off the rock and rowed back to camp, while Little Red Cloud remained behind to make sure that none of the outlaws would get away by swimming across the river. Two canoes, with five warriors in each, were anchored opposite the entrance to the cave, and the braves were instructed to capture Gregg and Allen alive at all hazards. The young chief then hastened to find out what had happened on the land side of the hills. He hoped that he would be able to meet the silver-haired old man and find out from him if there were any more exits through which the renegades could escape. But not seeing the old man anywhere, he decided to go in and take his chances at finding him in his den. Just as he was preparing to do so the old man appeared, accompanied by Winston. The redskins fell back in awe of him—all save the young chief, who advanced and shook hands with him.

"I thank you for shooting the Blackfeet dog on the other side of the river," he said to the old man.

"I am a friend of the Sioux," was the reply. "Where are the two maidens?"

"They are at the camp near the pillar drying themselves. They have been in the water."

Suddenly Winston made a rapid advance toward the little party of five Indians standing back a little distance from the cave, and slapped one of them a resounding blow in the face. The Indian was dumfounded, but promptly drew his knife to resent the blow.

"You are Yellow Bear," said Winston. "You killed and robbed Ethan Wilkes, my partner. I have been looking for you ever since. I have found you now, and am going to cram your scalp in your mouth."

CHAPTER XII.—The Disgrace of Yellow Bear.

"The paleface heap talk," said the warrior. "Yellow Bear will take his scalp."

"Tell me who took the papers from the body of Wilkes when he was killed by your band?"

"Ugh! heap much talk," was the reply, and the stalwart savage made toward him with his scalping knife in his hand.

Quick as a flash Winston gave him a blow between the eyes with his fist that sent him sprawling on his back. Ere he recovered his senses the white hunter had torn his scalp-lock from his head and crammed it into his mouth. The other warriors wanted to attack Winston. Little Red Cloud sang out:

"The white man has avenged his friend. If any Sioux warrior wants to avenge Yellow Bear let him do it. The white hunter will fight him."

"Yes, one at a time, I will fight any and all," said Winston.

One of the others sprang at him, tomahawk raised in the air. Quick as a flash he got a blow in the eye that laid him out on the ground. Winston got his fingers in his hair and held on to it till the warrior regained his wits.

"Shall I cut it off?" he asked of the warrior.

"No," said the old silver-haired man. "Don't take any more Sioux scalps. Yellow Bear is enough for today."

He threw the warrior from him as with contempt, and stalked over to where the scalped chief sat with bowed head, his entire form quivering with pain, and said:

"Yellow Bear is a live Indian but a dead warrior. He will roam the forest alone, despised by his people, and laughed at by the wolves and foxes. When his hair grows out again I will come and gather his scalp and make him eat it. The vengeance of Eric Winston will follow the murderers of Ethan Wilkes to the Happy Hunting Grounds. He did harm to no man, and his murder was for plunder alone."

The disgraced warrior made no reply. He could not even look a Sioux brave in the face again, for to lose one's scalp was the lowest depth of degradation to which a warrior could sink.

"I am the friend of the Sioux nation," said Winston. "Yellow Bear was my enemy and I took his scalp. If he has a friend who wants my scalp let him come and take it."

"That is enough," said the old man. "I will not have any more fighting today unless we can catch those outlaws under the rocks. Little Red Cloud, I want to see the two white maidens."

The young chief led the way to where the two young sisters were walking to and fro in the sunshine.

"My daughters," he said to them as he came up "who are you?"

"We are Laura and Lena Courtenay—two sisters who were captured by Raymond's band of outlaws in a little wagon train. Our uncle was murdered by them."

"You shall be avenged. Don't be worried. The young chief will protect you, and I am always near to render assistance," and with that he turned away from them as if to return to the cave under the hill.

But in another moment he wheeled round, ran to Lena and gazed in her face like one in a dream.

"Heavens, how like her you are!" and then turned abruptly away again.

Little Red Cloud ran after him and asked eagerly:

"Have you seen a face like hers, too?"

The old man stopped and glared at him.

"Yes," he said, "and it haunts me asleep and awake."

"So it does me—the sweet face of a white maiden."

The old man grasped him by the shoulder and asked:

"Where is your father?"

Little Red Cloud shook his head and answered:

"I don't know."

"And your mother?"

"I don't know."

"You don't know—I don't know—but the Great Spirit will some day tell us. I must go. Keep the caves guarded so Raymond's band cannot escape."

The old man hastened to the cavern, into which he disappeared. A few minutes later the yells of the warriors on the river told the young chief that something important had happened. He hastened to see what it was, and found that two of the outlaws had been captured, as they swam out from under the rocks in search of canoes to take the band away. They were villainous-looking fellows, one of whom was a very oily-tongued talker.

"What's the matter with you redskins?" he asked. "We are your friends. What's yer botherin' us for, eh?"

"Ugh! Little Red Cloud tell us catch you."

"Who in thunder is Little Red Cloud?"

"Chief of all the Sioux."

"Oh! got a new chief, eh? Well, he ought ter know his friends. Raymond's band came here to hide from ther soldiers, an' yer redskins don't want ter give us away."

When Little Red Cloud met the two prisoners the glib talker tried to outtalk him.

"You have two men—Gregg and Allen—in your band," said the young chief. "When they are given up to us you may go."

"Ah, Raymond will give 'em up as soon as he knows that you want 'em," said the man. "He is the friend of the Sioux!"

"He is the enemy of the Sioux. His band dress like Sioux warriors. They come and kill our people. Heap big cowards do that way."

The villains winced under the indignant words of the young chief. One of them was sent back inside to demand that Gregg and Allen be given up as the price of being permitted to leave the place. Then the canoe was rowed up to the banks in front of the pillar of the White Elk. As the canoe touched the bank, the silver-haired old man appeared, grabbed the outlaw, and hissed:

"Vengeance is mine at last!"

CHAPTER XIII.—The Dying Outlaw.

To say the outlaw was astonished at being thus seized and accosted by the silver-haired old man, would be putting it very mildly. He was amazed—dumfounded—and glared at the old man in a dazed sort of way.

"I don't know you, sir," he said. "Never saw you before in my life."

"Say you so? Is not your name Dodson?"

"Yes, that is my name," the prisoner replied. "But I never saw you before."

"Don't you remember the one crime for which you have been pursued ever since its commission?" the old man asked again.

Without answering the question, the prisoner turned to the young chief and said:

"I am your prisoner and not this old man's. I appeal to you for protection."

"The old man of the silver hair is wise, and the Sioux chief will not do aught against him."

"You will give me a chance for my life, will you not?"

"Why should I?"

The man was silent.

"Why should I? On what ground would you ask it?"

Still he was silent. He glared around like a wolf at bay, and then suddenly snatched a tomahawk from the belt of a warrior who was standing near him.

"I'll defend myself!" he exclaimed. "Touch me if you dare."

The old man smiled and drew a revolver from under the ample folds of his buckskin hunting shirt. The prisoner attempted to throw the tomahawk before he could fire, but the old man was too quick for him. Crack! The outlaw threw up both hands and staggered forward, reeling like a drunken man. Then he clutched his breast, as if something stung him there.

"Ha, ha!" laughed the old man. "Vengeance cometh, Dick Dodson. There are three more of you, and they will die as you die. You would like to have a priest, eh? There is no forgiveness for crimes like yours. Ha, ha, ha! I am a happy fiend to thus laugh at a dying man, ain't I?"

The dying wretch looked at him, and then at the dusky faces of the warriors around him. He found no sympathy in any of them.

The dying man was seized with convulsive twinges of pain, and rolled on the grass in his intense agony.

"Blame you! Blame you!" he cried in lucid moments.

"Ha, ha, ha! that's right. Sing me another verse. I like to hear it. They all amused me that way—oh, going to get up, eh?"

The dying man staggered to his feet, glared like a maniac around him, and then, with a wild shriek, turned and plunged into the river and sank out of sight.

"Ugh! white man dead and drowned," said an old warrior, looking down at the water where the villain had disappeared.

As for Little Red Cloud he was puzzled beyond expression. He could not understand the motive that moved the old man through his friendship for him. That he had just avenged some grievous wrong he did not doubt—just as Eric Winston had avenged the death of his partner in taking the scalp of Yellow Bear. He turned from gazing after the old man and looked in the direction of the two sisters, who had been eye-witnesses of the scene just described. Laura beckoned to him, and he went to her side.

"We are avenged," she said to him. "He killed our dear uncle. I am glad. But who is the old man, and why did he kill him?"

"I don't know."

"You don't know him?"

"No. He is a mystery to me, and yet I am drawn to him. I love him and will obey him as a son should obey his father. The great White Elk knows him, or he knows the White Elk, I don't know which. Many winters have made his hair and beard like the snow in color, and yet he is stronger than any two warriors."

Hours passed and the messenger who returned

to the outlaws to demand the surrender of the two renegades did not return to make his report. The braves on guard at the river entrance to the cave were told to remain there all night, and not allow anyone to pass out. Night came on and a storm of rain and wind with it. The Old Man of the Hills came to the two sisters and said:

"I have plenty of room, blankets and skins, together with perfect safety. You are welcome to all. The young chief will let you come."

"Yes," said the boy chief. "Go. He will take care of you and you will not lose any sleep by reason of the storm."

They went to his quarters under the rocks and were glad they did so, for the cold water of the spring refreshed them very much. During the storm the canoes had great difficulty in keeping their position opposite the entrance to the cave on the water side. A sudden flash of lightning revealed the presence of two men in the water swimming toward the north bank of the river. They made a hasty pursuit, but it was worse than useless in the darkness and roar of the storm. They reported to Little Red Cloud what happened. But it was against the customs of the redmen to venture out on duty in a storm, hence nothing was done. It was long after midnight ere the storm subsided. Then about an hour before daylight five canoes filled with Blackfeet warriors, towing three empty ones, pushed suddenly across the river and surrounded the two canoes on guard there. They were captured without a blow, and then, in response to a signal, two white men rowed into the cave and took the outlaws on board.

CHAPTER XIV.—The Escape of the Outlaws.

When morning came the two canoes in front of the entrance to the cave were missed. They could not be seen anywhere, even from the highest accessible peak of the rock. Scouts were sent down the river to look for them; but they soon returned to report that they could not be found below anywhere. The river had risen ten feet or more during the night, the result of the immense rainfall during the night, and little thought was given to the fact that the canoes had been captured and the outlaws assisted to escape.

"They can't get out of the cave now," said the boy chief. "The river has risen up and closed the mouth of the tunnel. But where are the canoes? The storm did not sink them. Where, then, did they go? White Elk promised us good luck, and this is bad luck. I'll go and see the silver-haired old man. He is wise. He can tell me what had happened."

He started to row back to the open space near the great White Elk pillar when a rifle-shot on the other bank startled him. The bullet whirled within an inch of his nose. Then a volley of a half-dozen rifles followed, and the bullets whistled around him. That aroused his indomitable war spirit to the highest pitch. He stood up to his full height in the canoe, and gave a warwhoop that awoke all the slumbering echoes of river and hills. In another moment his four warriors had rowed him to the bank, where he sprang ashore and gave the rallying cry of his tribe. Every warrior sprang forward on hearing it.

"The Blackfeet dogs are on the other side of

the river," he said to them. "They came and surprised our canoes last night. We will go over and take their scalps."

That meant fight, and every warrior at once gave a warwhoop and prepared to go. They put on war-paint and made themselves look as hideous as possible. In the meantime Little Red Cloud developed no little strategy in planning his attack on the enemy. Up the river a couple of miles was a creek which emptied into it on the south side. In that creek was concealed the canoes belonging to the band. He planned his attack so as to include a crossing of the river up there opposite the mouth of the creek, and a rush down to the rear of the enemy, thus getting them between him and the river.

He told his warriors what his plans were, and they at once saw the wisdom of them, believing him to be inspired by the Great Elk. At his signal they moved off, and two hours later were making their way to the rear of the enemy, entirely unknown to them.

When they arrived in the vicinity of the enemy's camp, Little Red Cloud was dumbfounded at seeing a band of about twenty well-armed white men there with them, and the two renegades, Gregg and Allen, among them. He also saw his own warriors, who had been captured in the canoes during the night, lying on the ground tied hard and fast.

"Gregg and Allen must not be killed," he said to his warriors. "Take them alive, but kill all the others you can."

Then they gave a whoop and fired. The execution was awful, for every warrior had taken aim at his victim. They tumbled over in every conceivable way, and when the rush was made with tomahawk and knife the dumfounded enemy was ill-prepared to resist it. The outlaws, of whom seven were hit, made a desperate stand, and the Blackfeet warriors rallied with them as the only hope left them.

With yells and shouts that resounded far and wide over river and hills, the Sioux went at them. A stalwart outlaw met Little Red Cloud, and undertook to do him up in true western style. But the young chief hurled his tomahawk into his face, blinding him completely. In another moment he had the outlaw's scalp. Just at that instant the great White Elk was seen on the peak of the pillar of rock on the other side of the river.

"Heap good Elk," cried the warriors, and the Blackfeet braves, believing that the omen was there for them, rallied and fought like demons.

Never before did redskins fight with such desperation. The outlaws were like fiends incarnate, and many a Sioux warrior went down under their revolvers. But they could not recover from the terrible blow of that first volley, when more than a score were wiped out, and they began to retreat toward the river. There were two ways for them to escape—both extremely hazardous. One was to make a break for their canoes and row away under fire, and the other to dash for the rocks a little below them and take refuge there to await a chance to get away by night.

The latter appeared to be their safest course and the whites proceeded to adopt it. But the Blackfeet warriors became demoralized as soon as retreat began, and made a break for the canoes, into which they crowded with all haste. Crack! crack! crack! went the rifles, and many a dusky

warrior tumbled into the water as the bullets stuck home.

"Now for the pale-face dogs!" cried the young chief, leading his warriors against the outlaws who had taken refuge among the rocks.

But now they had a hard job on hand. A dozen determined white men, well armed and protected by ledges of rocks, make a dangerous foe to attack. It did not take Little Red Cloud but a few moments to understand that much, and he very promptly called his warriors off. They came away very much surprised. But when he told them of the danger in assaulting their position, and of his plans to capture them alive they readily acquiesced and seemed to be satisfied.

"What's the matter with the Sioux?" asked a voice from the rocks. "What are they fighting their white friends for?"

"We are fighting the Blackfeet dogs, and white men fighting with them are our enemies," returned the boy chief.

"We are the friends of the Sioux."

"The pale-face lies when he says that. You harbor our enemies and fight for them."

"We have fought only when attacked, which everybody will do. What do you want of us now?"

"We want Gregg and Allen, and then you must go away."

"What will you do with them?"

"Kill 'em," was the reply.

"Then you can't have 'em."

"We take 'em—kill all of you," said the young chief, and immediately he proceeded to make all the preparations in his power to secure the capture of the entire party.

Warriors were sent below them to guard against escape in that direction. Then runners were sent out to two Sioux villages for all the warriors that could be found, with orders to have them come up at once. Having made all those preparations the young chief returned across the river to see if he could get another chance to talk with the Old Man of the Hills. To his very great delight he met the old man, who had come out with the two girls to give them the benefit of the sunshine.

"Who won the fight?" the old man asked, on seeing him.

"The Sioux warriors have taken many scalps, Blackfeet dogs have gone up the river. The pale and their enemies have fled before them. The faces are behind the rocks over there."

"Who are the white men over there?" demanded the old man.

"They are Raymond's bad men, and Gregg and Allen are with them. They are few and can't get away. I have sent runners for more warriors. We will capture all of them."

Turning to the two girls the old man said:

"In my cave you will be safe from any and every danger. I will leave you there together. There's food and water enough there to last you six months. Come," and he led them back into the cave and told Winston what happened over the river.

"Yes," said Winston, "we'll go and help the young chief. Tell them to spare the lives of Gregg and Allen."

"They have already told that, and not a warrior will touch one of them save to capture him. Come on."

They bade the girls good-by and passed out into the passage to join the boy Indian chief in an effort to capture renegades.

CHAPTER XV—The Capture of the Renegades.

The Sioux warriors, hearing that the Old Man of the Hills was coming to help them fight the battle against the Blackfeet and outlaws gave a grunt of satisfaction and looked upon him with superstitious awe, regarding him as being, in some mysterious way, connected with the great White Elk. Eric Winston knew as the man who had conquered Yellow Bear, one of the most stalwart warriors of the tribe and also looked upon him as one who would do terrible work in battle against the enemy.

"We will help you against your enemies," said the old man, as rifle in hand, he stood in the midst of the warriors. "Only promise me that you will spare Gregg and Allen. Those two men we want alive, and when we are done with them you can have them to do as you please with, so you do not let them get away from you."

The old man and Winston then went over among the rocks, and began to make their way toward the hiding-place of the outlaws. In less than a half-hour two of the outlaws had been shot through the head, and a third was wounded. That made them more cautious in their movements. It was a long time ere another shot was fired, and then another was wiped out.

Night came on, and Little Red Cloud, under the directions of the Old Man of the Hills had such a grip on the situation that not one of them could get through the line. Even the riverside was so blockaded by canoes that escape in that direction was impossible. They could not get a drink of water, nor a mouthful of food. When morning came, over one hundred more warriors had come in and were eager for the fight.

Little Red Cloud wanted to make an assault on the ledge of rocks and capture the few determined men behind it.

"No," said the old man, shaking his head. "Don't do that. You will lose twenty brave warriors in a charge, and Gregg and Allen would be killed. We don't want that. We want them alive. They can't get away, and must surrender today or to-morrow. Why should you sacrifice twenty or more of your braves when you can get them without the loss of one?"

The boy chief saw the good sense of what the old man said and readily acquiesced in his suggestions. The warriors who had just come in, however, were eager for a brush with the enemy and were hard to restrain. But the slightest word from the Old Man of the Hills was a law unto all the Sioux warriors there. They quietly submitted, and another night of patient watching followed. Early the next morning a white rag on a stick notified the redskins that the outlaws wanted to have a talk with them. Little Red Cloud responded, accompanied by two of his chiefs, and met Raymond himself, the captain of the band.

They glared at each other in silence for some time, after which the young chief asked:

"What does the pale-face want?"

"You are a pale-face yourself," said Raymond. "Why do you fight against your race?"

"I have never known any other than the redmen," he replied. "Why are you fighting against your people?"

"I am at war with the government, which is the enemy of the redmen all the time."

"We are at peace with the government now. You have two men whom we want. Why do you not give them up?"

"They are white men, and came to us for protection."

"You can't protect them, and if you fight any more we will scalp every one of you."

"Hold on, chief. Don't be in such a hurry," called out Raymond. "If we surrender, what will you do with us?"

"Send you to the fort."

"What for?"

"For punishment by your own people."

"What do you want us punished for?"

"You have killed our warriors who were fighting against the Blackfeet. We want your people to punish you because we don't want it said that we have done aught against your race. You have dressed your men like Sioux warriors and robbed and killed white people, making the white soldiers believe that the redmen did it."

Raymond laughed, and said that the redskins had no love for the whites, and should not mind the killing of a few of them.

"Will you give up Gregg and Allen?" Little Red Cloud asked.

"They have made their escape—got away last night."

"You are lying. If they are not with you, then I'll have the scalp of every white man behind those rocks!" and the eyes of the young chief fairly blazed with indignation. "You cannot trifle with Little Red Cloud. He will kill every white man of your band!" and again he turned away as if to leave the bandit.

"Little Red Cloud!" called the outlaw. "If I and my people can go away after we give up Gregg and Allen, we will turn them over to you. But if you insist on sending us to the fort we will fight till the last man is killed!"

"I will let your people go when you have given up Gregg and Allen," Little Red Cloud finally said to the chief to the outlaws. "But they must be given up at once."

"You shall have them within an hour from now," and the two men parted, the one to rejoin his dusky warriors, and the other his little band of desperadoes, who were more than half starved.

Little Red Cloud went back and told his warriors what was going to be done. They were far from being satisfied, for they wanted the scalps of the outlaws for the warriors that had been slain.

Just then the sounds of altercation were heard over among the rocks, and a few shots, with yells and imprecations, followed. Gregg and Allen were resisting arrest, determined not to be given up to the vengeance of the young chief of the Sioux. The redskins listened, and in a little while were a guard of outlaws appeared leading the two renegades, who were securely bound.

Little Red Cloud waited for them with folded arms, and the bandit in charge said to him:

"Chief, here are the men you wanted. Take 'em an' let us go."

"You can go," said Little Red Cloud, "but if you ever come into the country of the Sioux again, you will die at the stake. I have spoken," and he waved them away with his hand.

They turned away and hurriedly left the spot, disappearing behind the rocks. Gregg and Allen were pale and trembling. They were cruel fiends and cowards at heart. Resistance was now utterly useless, and they knew it.

"What are yer goin' ter do with us, chief?" Gregg asked.

"The old man of the white hair wants you," replied the chief, turning away as if he had too much contempt for them to say anything more to them.

The silver-haired old man came along, accompanied by Eric Winston, and the two stopped and looked at them. Winston stepped up to Gregg and looked into his face, as if to get a good impression of his features.

"Who are you?" Gregg asked.

"I am Eric Winston, the partner of Ethan Wilkes. You remember Ethan Wilkes, do you not?"

Gregg turned white as a sheet and almost sank down in his tracks, while Zack Allen trembled like a leaf as he gazed at the man. Both of them heard of the Nemesis who had wiped out so many of the band that killed Wilkes. To face him now made them feel that all hope was gone.

"You recollect him," said Winston. "So do I. I have been looking for you ever since you killed him, and now I have found you."

"I am glad I have met you," said Gregg, "for I can give you the papers he had with him that day. I didn't kill him, nor have any hand in it. Yellow Bear and his warriors did that. He will tell you so."

"Yellow Bear has gone into disgrace with his scalp in his mouth," said Winston. "I will see you over on the other side of the river."

They were then led into a canoe, and rowed across the stream to the base of the pillar of the White Elk. In the canoe Gregg whispered to Allen:

"I won't tell him where the papers are till he guarantees our safety."

"Yes; that will save us."

When they landed it was found that another band of warriors had come up from the village where the young chief lived, and with them came several families of the braves. Singing Bird, the fiancée of Little Red Cloud, was with them, and the moment she saw the young hero of her heart, she sprang forward with a glad cry and threw her arms around his neck. In the evening the silver-haired old man brought out Laura and Lena. When Singing Bird saw Little Red Cloud gaze at Lena as he did, she became furious with jealousy.

With a shriek she snatched up a tomahawk and flew at her to brain her. Quick as a flash the young chief caught her around the waist and flung her aside as if she was nothing to him.

CHAPTER XVI.—The Renegade Prisoners.

Singing Bird's sudden outburst of jealous rage caused a sensation among all those who witnessed it.

"The great chief of the Sioux does not love Singing Bird since he has seen the face of the white maidens," she said, dropping the tomahawk to the ground. "She does not want to live any longer. Her heart is broken. She shall die, and the waters shall hide her from his face forever," and with that she turned and ran toward the river.

Little Red Cloud darted after her, catching her around the waist again ere she reached the brink of the river.

"The eyes of Singing Bird cannot see straight. I love no one but her. I am the chief of my people and must do my duty to them. The great White Elk told me to do what we have done to-day. Singing Bird must believe me and not make any trouble."

The young maiden was too deeply in love with him not to listen to his words and believe him. She promised him that she would not again seek the life of the white maiden, and he led her back to the camp-fire, where she advanced to Lena and extended her hand toward her. Lena quickly threw her arms about her neck and kissed her, an act that completely won her heart. Then a similar act on the part of Laura finished the conquest, and the three maidens thus became fast friends.

Gregg and Allen were silent witnesses of the actions of the girls, and seemed to think the diversion quite a benefit to themselves in that it gave them time to collect their thoughts. As the three girls walked away together, Little Red Cloud turned to the silver-haired old man and said:

"They are here. They are yours. Do what you wish with them."

"Thanks, my friend," said the old man. "May the White Elk always give you good luck."

"And may you conquer in every battle against the Blackfeet," added Eric Winston. "Bill Gregg, you got the papers that were on the body of Ethan Wilkes when he was killed."

"Yes, and saved them," was the reply.

"What have you done with them?"

"They are hidden in a safe place."

"Where are they hidden?"

"That I will not tell you save as the price of my liberty."

"Oh, that is the game you propose to play, is it? Well, I am not going to give you liberty, but am going to make you give up those papers."

"Why you talk as if you thought you could do it."

"We will begin to-night, when all the warriors can see it and enjoy the fun. I am going to take a small iron bar and heat it red hot. A touch here and there every hour for two or three days, weeks or months, if necessary, will be my plan. You may hold out, for I shall be careful not to kill you, but I don't believe you. I'll take six months to burn the secret out of you if necessary."

Gregg turned ashen-hued as he heard the man unfold his plan and made no reply. He said that he would not begin till in the evening, and that would give him time to think.

"And you, Allen, were with him. You probably know where the papers are, too," said Winston.

"No, I don't. I never cared anything about 'em," said Allen.

"That may and may not be true. I'll give you the same that he gets. You were both in the same

party. The vengeance of Eric Winston has overtaken you. If you make a clean breast and give up the papers I'll give you a chance for your lives. I'll cut your bonds, give you a knife and let you fight me. If you win you may go free so far as I am concerned. You can take your choice."

"You will fight me before you go," said Little Red Cloud, who was standing by and listening to all that was said.

That was a damper on both of them, yet they would rather die fighting than be tortured.

"And what do you want of us, old man?" Gregg asked of the white-haired old man.

"I will tell you that when you have settled with Eric Winston."

"We can do that now," said Gregg. "The papers are hidden under a stone in front of the cabin of Badger Joe down on the South Fork."

"I know where Badger Joe's cabin is, and am goin' to send a runner there to see if you are telling the truth. If you are lying to gain time, I'll burn your ears off. Do you understand?"

"Yes. The papers are under the flat rock in front of the door tied up in a piece of oil silk."

"Very well. We shall see."

Eric Winston then held a short consultation with Little Red Cloud, and half an hour later a runner set out to go to the spot mentioned by the renegade. He would be gone two days, and then the truth would be known. In the evening the two prisoners were kept securely bound and guarded near the camp-fire, almost under the shadow of the White Elk. The three girls, now inseparable companions, were together, going here and there, wherever Singing Bird chose to lead them. At one of the camp-fires Laura saw the stalwart warrior who had saved her life in the water the day before. She did not know his name, but she had the courage to go up to him, extend her hand and say:

"You saved my life yesterday. You are a great brave, and I thank you."

"Ugh! Pale-face maiden heap brave, too. She killed the pale-face in the water."

"Why, I didn't know you did that, sister," said Lena, very much surprised.

"Yes, I had to," said she, and then Singing Bird gazed at her with awe. All Indians respect anyone who has killed something—a terrible commentary on human nature.

Laura then told the two girls of her adventure in the water the day before, when the canoe had been upset by the two outlaws at the mouth of the tunnel which led into the cave from the river side. It was while she was talking to the two girls by the camp-fire that a tall, lank, grizzled old white hunter came up clad in buckskin hunting-shirt and leggings, with the carcass of a deer on his shoulder and a rifle in his hand.

"Thar, redskins," he said as he dropped the carcass on the ground near the fire. "Thar's suthin' ter eat. Whar's ter chief?"

"Old chief dead," said one of the warriors. "Little Red Cloud chief now."

"Little Red Cloud chief! You don't tell me so now! Why he's er boy yit!"

"Waal, that beats me! Whar is he? I know that ere boy. I want ter see 'im."

"He is over by yonder camp-fire, sir," said Laura, pointing toward the spot where the young chief and his two prisoners were.

"Thank yer, miss," said the stranger, giving her

a sharp glance. "I reckon as how yer ain't er captive hyer, eh?"

"No, sir. I am under the protection of friends—my sister and I."

"Waal, that's good; glad ter hear it. I'll go and see ther young chief. He's a friend of mine," and he stalked away as if he cared no more for Indians than he did for so many straws.

The three girls gazed after him with great interest. Singing Bird said:

"He was the friend of my father. Great hunter is Swift Foot. He kill more deer and bear than all other hunters."

CHAPTER XVII.—A New Arrival.

When the newcomer approached the camp-fire where Little Red Cloud and his prisoners were he was recognized by the young chief, who came forward to meet him.

"Little Red Cloud is glad to see Swift Foot, the great hunter," he said.

"Thanks. Glad ter see yer, too, Little Red Cloud," said the hunter grasping his hand and shaking it heartily. "They tell me yer be the chief now."

"Yes, I am chief."

"Waal, now, I'm right glad ter hear it. Yer've got some of ther best warriors in ther West at yer back. Hallo! Bill Gregg an' Zack Allen, or I'm er liar."

"Yes," said Gregg. "I'm in trouble, Dan Hurley."

"Waal, now, we all git inter trouble sometimes. What's ther matter now, Bill?"

"We had a fight with Little Red Cloud, an' had to run for it. We joined Raymond's band for protection, but the chief made him give us up and so here we are."

"Waal, now, yer don't object ter bein' skulped for j'inin' Raymond's band, do yer?"

"We j'ined 'em just ter save ourselves—as a man would grasp at a straw when he is drownin'."

"Yes, waal—hello, Winston! Shoot me if I ain't glad ter see yer!" and he shook hands with Eric Winston, who greeted him cordially.

They gave him some supper, and as he ate, he talked. He seemed to be so rejoiced at seeing some white faces, that he asked no end of questions and answered a great many that were not asked.

They listened to him with interest, for they knew that though he was like a whirlwind with his tongue, he was also one of the best hunters and most fearless fighters in the entire Northwest.

"Did yer ever catch them villains who murdered yer pardner, Winston?" he asked, as he ate.

"Yes. I've sent Yellow Bear to the woods without his scalp, and the other two are tied to that sapling out there now," was the reply.

"Great grizzlies!" he exclaimed, as he glared at Gregg and Allen.

"We had nothing to do with it," said Allen, "though we were in the party with Yellow Bear at the time."

"That is enough. I will attend to all of you."

"Waal, now," said Swift Foot, "I reckon that ain't ther only thing ye've got ter answer for. Long time afore yer pard was wiped out I took er

little baby girl away from 'em an' gave her ter Jack Courtenay's wife ter raise. Jack moved back ter Missouri an'—"

"In the name of heaven, man!" cried the silver-haired old man, springing to his feet and glaring at him. "What are you saying?"

"I was sayin' as how I met Bill Gregg and Zack Allen with some redskins one day, an' they had a little baby girl as were er cryin' its eyes out for its mother. I begged 'em for it an' they give her to me. I took her ter Jack Courtenay's cabin that night an' his wife took care on it as if it was her own flesh an' blood. Jack moved back to Missouri the next winter an' I ain't seen 'im since. Did yer know Jack, mister?"

"No," answered the old man, in a hoarse whisper. "But when was this? When did you get that child from them? Think—think, and tell me."

"Waal, I reckon as how it war nigh on ter fourteen years ago," added Swift Foot.

"And you gave her to a family of the name of Courtenay?" Winston asked, looking hard at the hunter.

"Yes, that's the name. Jack Courtenay's wife was as fine a woman as ever lived."

Winston turned to the old man and said:

"The two sisters are Courtenay's. Let's ask them about it."

The three girls were quickly sent for and they came. Singing Bird was between them, uncertain which of the two she loved the most.

"What was your father's name?" Winston asked the moment they came up to the camp-fire.

"His name was Jack," said Laura.

"He is dead?"

"Yes; he died three years ago at our home in Missouri."

The old man advanced toward her and asked in a hoarse voice:

"Did you ever hear him or your mother say anything about a little baby girl which was given to them by a friend?"

Laura looked up at him in the greatest surprise, and said:

"Yes, sir. My sister here is the one, but we didn't know that anyone but us knew the secret."

The old man stared at Lena, who in turn stared at him.

Suddenly the old man turned and walked over to where Gregg was tied to the sapling, and hissed:

"Bill Gregg, tell me where you got that child!"

"I took her from a warrior who was going ter knock its brains out."

"Who was the warrior?"

"His name was Black Beaver. He was killed five years ago."

"Do you know where he got the child?"

"No."

"I am not going to ask you that question again, and you had better tell me the truth about it. Do you know where he got that child?"

"I heard that it was the child of a man whose cabin was burned that day."

"Whose cabin was it?"

"I—I—believe it was the cabin of a hunter named Harper," said the wretch.

"Harper. Will Harper, eh?"

"Yes."

The old man turned and gazed at Lena, and asked:

"And you are that baby-child?"

"Yes, sir."

He tore the long silvery beard from his face, the white flowing wig from his head, and cried out:

"I am Will Harper! I am your father! My child! My child!"

CHAPTER XVIII.—Burned Out Revelations.

Every soul around that camp-fire was astounded at the sudden transformation of the silver-haired old man into a stalwart hunter of middle age. They stared at him as if unable to comprehend the change. But Lena, with the impulsiveness of her affectionate nature sprang forward with a glad cry, and was clasped in his arms.

"My father! my father!" she cried.

"My child! my child!" sobbed the strong man, as he held her in his arms, "you have the sweet face of your mother. That is why I have gazed at you so. You are the image of your mother, my child."

Bill Gregg and Zack Allen turned ashen-hued as they saw that Will Harper had turned up alive.

"Its all up with us, Bill," whispered Allen.

"I won't give up yet," said the determined renegade. "I hold another secret that he can't git outen me."

"Bill, no man can stand fire," said Allen, shaking his head. "He'll burn it outen yer."

"Father, what became of mother?" Lena asked, looking up into her father's face.

Instantly a vengeful look came into the face of Will Harper. He pushed her aside, and said: "Let me ask him," and going up to Gregg again, he said:

"I am not through with you yet. What became of my wife when my cabin was burned?"

"I heard Black Beaver say she was killed when the babe was taken from her."

"Did anyone else hear him say so?"

"Yes," spoke up Allen. "I did."

"You were there?"

"I was with Bill when he took the babe from him."

"Who burned the cabin?"

"The Indians, I reckon."

"Did you see 'em do it?"

"No."

"Weeks before that my little Harry was stolen from us," said Harper. "I never could find the trail again after it struck the river. Do you know anything about what became of him, Bill Gregg?"

"Harry! Harry! Harry!" said the young chief, coming forward and repeating the name. "Did you say Harry?"

"Yes, my little boy was named Harry," replied Harper, turning and confronting him. "Did you ever hear the name before?"

"Yes, yes. It rings through my mind all the time. When I was a little child I was called Harry. I remember a sweet face like that one there—it seems like a dream to me—and she called me Harry."

"Eh! What! You—Little Red Cloud was called Harry when a child!" and the strong hunter seized him by the shoulder and whirled him around to gaze at him again by the light of the camp-fire.

Just at that moment a series of war-whoops, as if coming from a thousand throats, burst upon the night air, followed by the popping of rifles and revolvers. Every Sioux warrior knew that the Blackfeet braves had come to make a night attack. They were familiar with the war-cry of their enemies. At the first whoop Little Red Cloud gave vent to the whoop of the Sioux. The warriors responded promptly, and in less than two minutes a most terrific battle was raging around the prisoners. The three girls screamed with terror, for they were suddenly caught in the midst of the combatants.

"Come with me!" cried Harper, seizing Lena and Laura by their hands. "Come, Singing Bird, I'll place you in a safe place and come back again. Winston! Swift Foot! Fight till I come back!"

He hurried away with the girls and placed them in his quarters under the rocks.

"You will be safe here," he said. "Don't be afraid. No one can come to you here," and then he gathered up rifle, a brace of revolvers, and hurried out, closing the passage behind him.

Out in the open air again, he found that a large band of Blackfeet warriors, aided by the remnant of Raymond's gang, had surprised the Sioux camp and were fighting like demons. Raymond and two of his outlaws had seen him run off with the girls. They were the prizes for which they were contending, and so gave instant pursuit. Thus it happened that when he came out and started to join the combatants Will Harper was met by the three bandits. They made a combined attack on him. But they little dreamed what manner of man he was. He was the incarnation of war. Drawing a revolver, he shot two of them dead ere they knew he had begun to fight. Then he stood face to face with Raymond, the bandit chief, who had emptied his revolver in the first charge. He now had only his knife to depend upon.

"I hold your life in my hands, you scoundrel!" said Harper. "Defend yourself, for I am going to wipe you from the face of the earth!"

Raymond saw that he had a dangerous man to deal with, and stood on the defensive. Harper charged on him, and forced the fighting from the start. He kept falling back toward the combatants.

"Now!" exclaimed Harper, making a dash at him, beating down his guard, and almost cutting his right arm from his shoulder.

"I am disarmed! I surrender," cried the outlaw.

"You can't surrender to me," was the reply, as with another blow the left arm was served as the right had been.

"Quarter! quarter!" screamed the wretch.

"No quarter for bandits!" and another blow nearly severed his head from his shoulders.

That was the end of him, and the next moment the dauntless man dashed into the thickest of the combat and began emptying his brace of revolvers with such deadly accuracy that the enemy was dismayed and began to fall back. Little Red Cloud came up by his side fighting like a young tiger. His ringing war-cry resounded high above the dash of arms, and his oldest warriors were amazed at the havoc he created in the ranks of the enemy. Suddenly he saw that the two renegade prisoners had been released and that they were making their escape to the rear of the Blackfeet warriors. He cried out:

"Kill the prisoners. Don't let 'em get away!"

But they got away, and the daring young chief sprang through the surging ranks of his dusky foes in pursuit of them, followed by Harper and Eric Winston. The enemy closed in on them and the most desperate struggle ever known in the annals of border warfare took place around them.

"The White Elk! The White Elk!" cried Harper, and the name seemed to have some magic influence on the combatants, for the Blackfeet gave way, thinking the mighty beast was even in their midst. The three men darted forward in pursuit of the renegades who had sped away in the darkness of the night.

CHAPTER XIX.—The Escape and Recapture.

The sudden break of the two prisoners for liberty created a diversion in favor of the Sioux, because their dash through the ranks of the Blackfeet warriors caused some confusion among them. Then the dashing charge of the three white men and Little Red Cloud, with the terrible havoc they made among them, caused something of a panic to take place, particularly as the Sioux charged in a body at the same time. It did not take but a couple of minutes more to start the retreat. Then some Blackfeet warrior, thinking that all was lost, gave the yell of dismay, which utterly demoralizes an Indian when he hears it. Quick as a flash Little Red Cloud gave a whoop of triumph and his warriors took it up. The little handful of outlaws could not stand the pressure nor stem the tide of defeat. The sight of the White Elk also discouraged the Blackfeet and ensued the Sioux braves.

"Catch Gregg and Allen!" cried Eric Winston.

"Catch Gregg and Allen!" sung out the young chief.

"Catch the renegades!" yelled Will Harper, and he made a desperate effort to get at them.

But Gregg and Allen knew that their safety depended on getting away into the woods under cover of darkness, where no trail could be followed till morning came. Of course they lost no time in breaking for the woods, and as the woods were just a little distance away they succeeded in reaching them. Swift Foot was not far behind them. His speed was like that of the deer, and he would have overtaken them but for being attacked by two very stalwart Blackfeet braves, who believed they could take his scalp and then hasten on in their retreat. But they little dreamed of the terrible strength and activity of the man they had attacked. He leaped clear over the head of one of them, giving him a blow on the neck with his heel that knocked him flat on the ground. Ere the other could recover from his amazement the white hunter had nearly severed his head from his shoulders with his bowie.

As the other rose to his feet Winston was upon him, and he was wiped out in an instant.

"Which way did they go?" Winston asked.

"Into the woods."

Harper came up and saw that further pursuit would be useless during the darkness.

"They have gotten away from us," he said bitterly.

"Yes," said Winston; "but we won't let the Blackfeet rest till they give 'em up. I am going

to have them if I have to make up as a Blackfeet warrior and go among them."

"We had better go together," said Harper, "as they and two or three of the remaining outlaws will be apt to stay in a bunch for self-defense."

"Yes, so they will," put in Swift Foot, "and I'll jine you in that little jaunt. I ain't had any really good exercise in months."

"I will go, too," said Little Red Cloud. "Where you go, I will go," and he laid a hand on the shoulder of Will Harper as he spoke.

"Very well. Little Red Cloud's arm is strong and his heart brave as an eagle's."

"We must go back and let the girls in the cave know that we are going," said Winston, "or they may think we have fallen in battle, and that they must depend on themselves."

"You are right, Eric. We will go back and see them," and Will Harper turned and led the way toward the rocks, under which his loved child was waiting for him. When they reached the late camp they counted the number of dead warriors that had fallen in the battle. They lay scattered all around about the camp-fire. Five or six white men were among them, including Raymond, the outlaw, himself.

"It was a royal fight," said Eric Winston, "and I never saw men fight better than did the Sioux."

"Nor I," said Swift Foot. "They would make fine soldiers if trained in regular style."

"Sioux warriors are very brave," remarked Little Red Cloud.

"So they are, chief, and all the better for the brave chief they have to lead them."

The warriors slowly returned from the pursuit and devoted themselves to throwing the dead into the river, after which they found the girls waiting for them.

"Oh, my father!" cried Lena, running to him and throwing her arms around his neck. "I was so afraid you would be killed and I'd be left alone in the world."

"Well, you see, none of us are killed, my child," he replied. "We whipped the enemy and drove him back. But Gregg and Allen got away, and we are going after them as soon as it is light enough for us to see the trail."

"How long will you be gone?"

"I don't know, my child. But you will be safe in here. Here are water and provisions enough for months. You will have nothing to do but stay here till we come back. I will show you how to open and shut the door, but you must not attempt to go out under a week. If we don't come back inside of that time, you might go out and put yourself under the protection of the Sioux."

"But how can we tell whether it is day or night in here?" Laura asked.

"Across the roof of this room is a large rent or crevice through which light comes, though you cannot see the sky or the sunshine. You will know by that."

They sat down and talked for a long time; and then the three men lay down on the bearskins to sleep. The girls followed their example, and in a little while they were all soundly sleeping.

Just before day Harper awoke and called up his two companions. They arose and slipped out of the chamber, leaving the girls asleep Out-

side near the rock they found Little Red Cloud waiting for them.

"Gregg and Allen are in the cove under the rock," said the young chief.

"Eh? What?"

"I saw them, with two pale-faces, go in. They said you would follow the Blackfeet, and that they would come back and go down the river in a canoe."

"They are shrewd," said Harper, "but we'll now get 'em again. We were going to follow the Blackfeet, but won't do it now."

"No; we'll stop an' catch 'em," said the young chief.

"But your warriors will want to follow them, chief," said Winston, "and you had better go with them."

"No. I won't go until I have caught Gregg and Allen," and the young chief seemed to be very determined on that point.

"Where did they go in, chief?"

"In there," pointing to the very entrance from which they had just emerged.

"I don't half like that," said Harper. "They are capable of any villainy, and might accidentally find their way into the chamber where the girls are."

"What shall we do, then?"

"Why, go back and tell the girls we are not going away at all—at least for the present. That will make them feel easier in mind. Then we must devise some way to get at 'em."

"Yes, that's the best plan."

They left Little Red Cloud and made their way back to the cavern, where they found the two girls and Singing Bird still soundly sleeping in each other's arms.

When the girls awoke they were told of the change in the programme, and they were very glad. They all ate a hearty breakfast of buffalo meat, after which Will Harper took down a lantern, put some matches in his pocket, and motioned to the other two to follow him. They did so, and once more the girls were left in the cave by themselves.

CHAPTER XX.—The Father and Son Meet.

On finding themselves cut loose by a Blackfeet warrior during the thickest of the night attack, Gregg and Allen, instead of taking arms and engaging in the battle, made a break for the rear.

The pursuit that instantly followed quite demoralized the Blackfeet and caused their retreat. The combined charge of the Sioux completed the panic, and the redskins broke and fled in every direction.

"This way, pard!" called Gregg, making a dash for the woods nearest them.

"Quick!" cried Allen, dashing away at the top of his speed.

The two other whites joined with them, and they entered the woods together. Once in the woods they knew they would be safe, and so they did not run two hundred yards after they got there.

"They won't try to follow us in the darkness," said Gregg.

"No," said one of the outlaws. "They can't see any trail. But they'll follow us in the morning."

"Of course they will," said Gregg. "They'll bring the whole Sioux tribe to the front, and crowd the Blackfeet to the wall. What we ought to do now is just what they don't expect us to do."

"What's that, pard?"

"Go round to the cave again, go in an' stay there till the Sioux go off in purusit of the Blackfeet. Then we can come out, get a canoe, an' go down the river."

"Pard, it's a wise head you have," said one of the outlaws. "Let's go right away. They won't dream of us goin' back thar."

They started off, making a wide detour toward the south, and two hours later began to approach the great rock from the lower side. Little Red Cloud had lain in his blanket to sleep, and had probably slept a couple of hours when he awoke and began thinking of his Singing Bird and the two white maidens; he could sleep no more.

Something impelled him to get up and walk over toward the entrance of the cave, and as he did so he heard footsteps and voices. Quickly concealing himself behind a boulder he listened. To his amazement Gregg, Allen and two other white men came along. They were talking, and he heard enough to understand the situation. To attack them would be a desperate thing, and probably worse than useless, so he let them go on, and saw them enter the cave. Then he kept watch till daylight, in order to see Harper and Winston the first thing in the morning as they came. The reader has seen how Harper was surprised at his news. He went back into the cave and told the girls what had happened. Singing Bird wanted to go out and see the young chief.

"I will bring him to you when we come in again," said Harper.

They then went out and left them alone in the cave. But the young chief, when he told his braves where the renegades were, found that all of them wanted to march against the Blackfeet village at once, and were willing to leave Harper, Winston and Swift Foot to look after the renegades. He accordingly told them that they could go under the leadership of another chief—Falling Rain—and he would remain with ten warriors to help catch the renegades and two outlaws.

"There is heap goods in the pale faces' cave which we get for Sioux warriors," he said to them.

They were satisfied to follow his advice, and Falling Rain set out on the trail of the Blackfeet without him. With his ten warriors he at once proceeded to place sentinels at various points to give signals if the renegades showed themselves anywhere. Then he waited for the three white men to show themselves again. Harper came out after him, led him to the cave to let Singing Bird see him, and then he joined them in the search for the four villains.

"The chances are that they are sleeping," he said to them, "and if so we'll hear them snoring."

They began a slow, cautious movement, a string holding them together, to prevent anyone from getting lost, and for half an hour they crept on through the dark passages without hearing any sounds whatever. Suddenly Harper came to a stop, and listened.

"They are sleeping," he whispered. "I can hear their snoring."

They advanced slowly, till they could hear all four snoring like porpoises. He stopped and lit his lantern, which he carried behind him as he advanced. Ten minutes later they stood over the four men as they lay on the ground at their feet, soundly sleeping. He held the lantern, while Winston and the others disarmed the outlaws. Gregg and Allen were not armed at all. Then covering them with their revolvers, they called out to them:

"Get up there, you villains!"

They sprang up to find a revolver staring each one in his face.

"Do you surrender?"

"Yes—don't shoot!" cried one of the outlaws.

"Hold out your hands, then."

They held out their hands and Winston bound them.

"Now we have you again," said Harper.

Gregg was utterly broken up by his capture, and knowing that his life depended on keeping his secret, he made up his mind to die rather than tell all he knew. Allen was equally as much demoralized, and did nothing but groan all the way out to the open air, where they were taken as soon as possible. They were taken to the same camp, which was now deserted, and made fast to the same saplings again.

"We were going to commence where we left off last night, Bill Gregg," said Harper.

"You can burn me alive if you like, Will Harper," said Gregg, in very determined tones. "You have me in your power, and I can't help myself. But you won't get any more information out of me till you give me my liberty."

"Before I give you your liberty," hissed Harper, "I'll cut you into inch pieces and feed you with them. I have promised to give you a chance for your life when you have told me all—the chance of a fair fight. You must take that chance or the alternative. You can take your choice. I am not the man for you to trifle with."

"What are you goin' ter do with me?" Allen asked.

"Just as I deal with Gregg so will I deal with you," was the reply. "You are as bad as he is."

"And what are you going to do with us?" one of the outlaws asked.

"Turn you over to these warriors here to have all the fun with you they want. Now, Gregg, are you ready to go on where you left off? Is it true my wife perished in the fire of my cabin?"

"Yes."

The face of Will Harper twitched with emotion, and it was some time ere he spoke again. Then he asked the question as to what became of his little boy. Gregg was silent. Harper procured a brand from the fire and approached.

"Don't be a fool, Bill Gregg," said Allen. "Tell 'im to onct an' be done with it."

Gregg remained silent and Harper started to apply the torch.

"Hold on a moment," he said. "Give me a minute or two."

Harper waited and glared at him.

"Your boy is alive," he said.

"Where is he?"

"He is the young chief of the Sioux—Little Red Cloud."

The firebrand dropped from Harper's hand and he turned to stare at the noble youth at his side. The young chief returned his gaze with tenfold interest.

"Harry!"

"Father!"

In another instant the two strong men were locked in each other's arms, and sobs burst from the father. The other had been trained to the Indian school of stoicism, and did not give way to his emotions.

Harper held him off at arm's length and gazed at him.

"My son—my son!" he sobbed, and sat down on a stone to compose himself.

"My father, my heart is glad," said Little Red Cloud, laying a hand on his shoulder. "I will be as a child to obey you in all things. I remember that once the name of Harry was mine, but it seems like a dream to me. My sister's face must be like my mother's, for it has haunted me ever since I saw her."

"Yes, yes, my son. She has the face of her mother—her very image. Oh, heaven, and she was murdered in her home by fiends!"

"I'll go and bring the girls here," said Eric Winston, hastening away from the spot and going to the cave.

CHAPTER XXI.—Nemesis at Work.

On entering the cave Eric Winston found the three girls walking about in the semi-twilight of the place.

"I have come to take you all out to the camp," he said to them. "We have caught the two renegades, and they have told all. Little Red Cloud is the son of Will Harper, and the brother of Lena here."

A glad cry burst from Lena and Singing Bird at the same time. They rushed into each other's arms with tears of joy in their eyes.

They went out with Winston, and when they reached the camp Lena rushed to the young chief and threw her arms about his neck!

"My brother!" she said.

"Sister, sister—you look like mother! Your face has haunted me ever since I first saw it."

Then Singing Bird gave him her caresses, and seemed as happy as a child.

"You ought ter let us go for that, Will Harper," said Zack Allen, when he saw how happy they were.

"You can go free when you have killed me, Zack Allen. Vengeance for the murder of my wife has not yet been completed."

As the messenger who had been sent for the papers under the stone in front of the Badgers's log-cabin had not yet returned, nothing would be done to them till that time. They were taken into the cave and securely bound for safe keeping, for fear of a surprise from a band of Black-foot warriors. A runner was sent to meet the other one and tell him where they were.

During the time that followed they made quite a happy family, for they walked about in the groves, round on the river, and laughed and sang

and talked as though no blood had been shed in the efforts to bring about this happy reunion.

Swift Foot took a fancy to Laura, because she had killed five warriors during the trouble, and didn't seem to think it anything to brag of. She liked him because of his jolly good nature and fearlessness in danger. Lena did not leave her father's side a moment, if she could help it, and was never tired of talking to him and calling him by the endearing name of father.

At last the messenger came back with the papers in his possession. Winston took them and examined every one very carefully.

"They are all here," he said, "and they make me a rich man. He had a great deal of property in St. Louis, one-half of which comes to me and the other half to his people."

"I am glad for your sake, Eric Winston," said Harper, "for you have been a true friend all the time."

"Are the papers all there?" Gregg asked from where he was bound.

"Yes, they are all here."

"I suppose you don't feel like thankin' me for 'em?"

"No, not in the least," he replied. "You didn't give 'em up voluntarily."

He said no more, and after a while Harper said:

"Gregg, I am going to turn you loose now with a bowie-knife. If you can get away with me you are free as far as I am concerned," and taking two bowie-knives he went up to the sampling and cut him loose. Then tossing one of the bowie-knives at his feet, he said:

"Take up that and defend yourself."

The renegade picked up the knife and stood on the defensive. Harper made a rush at him and he sprang aside. Then they closed in a death-struggle. But it was over in a moment, and the renegade sank down to the ground.

"Father," said Little Red Cloud, as Harper cut Allen loose, "let me avenge my mother. Let me fight him!"

"Very well, my son. There he is. Kill the wretch."

"Little Red Cloud then went at him, and Allen had his hands full at the start. But he fought shy, making no aggressive attack at all, till at last the young chief made a rush that bore him to the ground. In another moment the young chief had settled him, and in a few minutes he had joined Gregg in the unknown space of the universe.

Then the young chief gave a tremendous whoop in true Indian style, and the ten warriors with him responded in kind. The two outlaws looked on and saw Gregg and Allen wiped out.

"That's rough on us, pard," said one to the other in a whisper.

"Yes. I hope they'll give us the same chance."

"Yes, but they've turned us over to the redskins, an' when did yer ever know a redskin ter give a white man a chance for his life?"

The Indians next came in for their play with the two outlaws. They looked appealingly at the young chief, and then at Harper.

"I say," one of them called, "give us a chance, too. We ain't done you no harm as we know on"

"You are the prisoners of the Indians," said Harper. "I have nothing to do with you."

"You were in the band that killed my uncle," said Laura. "I don't see that you are any better than those two renegades."

"Waal, we ain't no worse," they replied, "an' ef you give 'em a chance, yer ought ter give us one."

"That is for the Sioux braves to decide. If they see proper to do so, all right."

"We will give 'em a chance," said Little Red Cloud, after a pause of some minutes. "They may run the gauntlet when the warriors come home with the Blackfeet scalps."

The two outlaws turned deathly pale when they heard that, for though they had never seen it they knew what the ordeal was. It would give them about one chance in a hundred. The ordeal was to strip the victim to the skin, and let him run at full speed between a long line of warriors with knives, every warrior having a hack at him as he passed. It was almost sure death to the victim, and afforded infinite amusement to the savages.

"What say you to that?" Harper asked.

"All right; it suits me," said one of them.

"Yes, and me, too," put in the other.

They knew that it would be at least a week ere the warriors came back and during that time they believed they would be able to make their escape in some way.

Little Red Cloud then ordered the ten warriors to take them to his village and keep them under a strong guard till the warriors returned, as the vicinity of the pillar of the White Elk was a dangerous place to keep them, on account of the number of parties that came there for good omens. They were securely bound and taken away, thus leaving their young chief without a single warrior to his tribe.

But he was with his father and sister, and the other two white men were as true friends as ever he could wish. The evening after they left with the prisoners the little party was met by a band of Blackfeet and all made prisoners themselves. The two outlaws became frantic with joy. They leaped, shouted, sang and hugged each other like a couple of lunatics. Their captors did not know what to think of them. But at last they told their story, and begged that the hand go to the pillar of the White Elk and capture the young chief of the Sioux and the three white men, together with the three maidens.

The hope of capturing the young chief set the Blackfeet wild. They made a forced march and reached the place near midnight. But the young chief and his friends were in the secret cave when they arrived, and early the next morning Harper himself discovered their presence, for he was savagely attacked by four warriors as he attempted to go out into the open air.

But he soon disposed of his four assailants, one of which was a white man, whom he wounded and then dragged inside the cave and closed the stone door. The wounded white man turned out to be one of the two men Little Red Cloud had sent to his village the day before. The man was bound hand and foot.

"We must catch that other renegade or out-

law," said Harper, "and then I am ready to leave this place forever."

CHAPTER XXII.—Running the Gauntlet.

On the third day after the arrival of the band of Blackfeet the four men in the cave made the discovery that the other outlaw and four Indians were on guard outside in front of the entrance to the cave.

"Now we have a chance to get him," said Winston.

"How?"

"We four can creep up near enough to shoot down the four redskins, and then make a rush on him."

"But there may be others near."

"No; the entire band is up there by the pillar of the White Elk, waiting for the good omen."

"Then let's make the attempt," said Harper, and they proceeded at once to do so. The five guards were evidently unconscious of danger. The crack of four rifles laid the four Indians out, and ere the outlaw could recover from his amazement, the four men were upon him. He was seized, disarmed, and run into the cave so quickly that not one of the other warriors had seen it. In less than three minutes from the time the shots were fired the outlaw was alongside his missing comrade, and the most astonished man in the world.

"We have both of you again," said Harper.

"Yes. It's our luck, I suppose," was the reply.

"Yes. I hope you will get what good luck ought to give you this time—and that is a chance to die the death of dogs."

"They shall run the gauntlet," said Little Red Cloud, in determined tones.

The next day the four brave men heard sounds of battle, and on going out to see about it, found that the Blackfeet had been attacked by a band of Sioux.

They lost no time in going into the battle, and their appearance, together with the terrible havoc created by their revolvers, quickly put the Blackfeet to flight. The victorious Sioux hailed their young chief with shouts of joy. They had been victorious, and came back with many scalps to celebrate their victory under the shadow of the great White Elk.

It was a great relief to them to get out of the cave once more, and the sunshine seemed never so pleasant as when they felt its warmth after being deprived of it for a whole week.

That evening was one of feasting and dancing with the victorious Sioux. Little Red Cloud told them that he had two white prisoners whom they could make run the gauntlet if they wanted to, and gave them the story of how they had fought with the Blackfeet against the Sioux. They greeted the announcement with yells, and prepared at once to begin the sport. Laura and Lena begged to be taken back to the cave, as they did not care to witness any more bloodshed. Winston conducted them back, but Singing Bird, being a genuine Indian, remained so as to be near her lover.

Harper and the other two white men remained

to see it, for they had no more sympathy for the wretches than for so many rattlesnakes.

We will not depict the horror of the ordeal further than to say that the two wretches failed to get through safely, receiving so many wounds that they died before morning—a fit ending for such lives as they had lived.

Now that the warriors had returned and Harper had recovered his two children, a consultation as to what he should do in the future naturally followed.

"I don't know what I shall do, Eric," he said to Winston, the next day after the return of the warriors. "I have found my children. One has been reared as an Indian, and the other as a white girl. Harry is engaged to wed Singing Bird, and is also the chief of the tribe. It is not likely that he would care to give up his love and the leadership of the tribe to go with me. It would not be right for me to take up my residence here with the tribe, and thus cut off all intercourse with the outer world on account of the two girls. On the other hand I have nothing in the way of the world's goods, hence, to take them back to the settlement would be consigning them to poverty."

Eric listened in silence till his old friend had finished speaking, and then said:

"I have thought of all that, old pard, and have got something to say about it. You saved my life three times, and I saved yours once. That was what friends would do any time. Well, we've spent a good deal of our lives trying to keep our hair on our heads, and I'm thinking it's time for us to stop that sort of business. I am a rich man now. I can go to St. Louis and put Wilkes's papers in the hands of the courts and settle down very rich. But I am not going to do that unless you and your girls go with me. I'll buy you a farm, stock it, and give it to you. Then I'll buy one alongside of it for myself so we shall be neighbors. Then if Lena will have me for a husband I'll be your son-in-law. But whether she does or not, I'll give you the farm. Swift Foot shall have one also, if he will go with us. Now what do you say to that, Will Harper?"

"There's my hand, Eric."

The two men clasped hands and stood silent by each other's side for several minutes. They were men who knew how to appreciate friendship.

"And if Harry will come with us he shall have a farm, too," said Winston.

"I don't know whether the life would suit him or Singing Bird," said Harper.

"We can see him about it and find out."

That afternoon Harper and the young chief had a long talk together, with no one but themselves to hear it.

"I will go with you, father, to the end of the earth," said the brave youth. "To remain here as chief is to run the risk of being killed in battle all the time. I'll talk to Singing Bird, and see if she will go."

"But how can she get away from her people?"

"I'll go to Washington to see the Great Father—that will please them—and will returned no more."

"Yes, that would be a good way. Your head is wise."

That evening he told Singing Bird that he was

going away to see the Great White Father in Washington.

"Singing Bird will die," she said. "She cannot live when her heart is so far away from her."

"Singing Bird shall not die, for she shall go with Little Red Cloud as his wife. He will not leave her behind."

She sprang up and kissed him, the happiest maiden under the stars that night. Thus was it arranged before the plan was submitted to the warriors and chiefs of the tribe. A few days later Little Red Cloud told his warriors that he was going to visit the Great Father and ask him to grant certain rights to the tribe which would keep the Blackfeet out of their reservation altogether. They heartily approved of the plan, and he prepared to go.

CHAPTER XXIII.—Conclusion.

Singing Bird at once prepared for her marriage to the young chief, and the warriors busied themselves in making the event a big success. Band after band of warriors came in from the shadow of the pillar of the White Elk.

Laura and Lena helped her deck herself out as became the bride of a chief.

One day Eric Winston said to Lena:

"Your brother is setting you a good example."

"In what way?" she asked.

"In getting married."

"Oh," she laughed. "Everybody ought to marry, I suppose."

"Yes, and you particularly," he added.

"Oh, I am too young yet."

"You are as old as Singing Bird, and much better fitted to make a man happy. I want you for my wife. I will devote my life to make you happy."

"Then I will have you," she said, laying a hand on his arm and looking up into his face.

"Ah! you don't know how happy you have made me, Lena, for I have loved you ever since the first time I saw your face. I am going to do all in my power to make your life one of supreme happiness."

"I am satisfied," she said, and then she asked:

"But when do you want me to become your wife?"

"When we have gone back to the States and selected our new home."

"Well, you won't claim me before then?"

"No."

"Nor tell any one of the engagement?"

"No. I will leave that for you to do."

That very evening she told Laura and Singing Bird, and they both congratulated her on her good fortune.

The time for the marriage came, and it was celebrated by the redskins in their rude, barbaric way. A happier bride would be hard to find than was Singing Bird.

A few days after the marriage Little Red Cloud made a speech to the warriors before taking leave of them to go to Washington. He told them of the perils they had shared together, of the past glories of the tribe, and the prowess of the Sioux in battle, and the fear their enemies had for them.

The speech ended, they took leave of him and

his friends, and stood on the bank of the river and gazed after the two canoes as they passed down with the current.

When they were a half-mile away they heard a mighty shout go up from the warriors, and, looking back, were astonished at seeing the form of the great White Elk on the peak of the pillar of stone. The sight was too much for the young chief to look at and keep silent. He rose to his feet and gave vent to a yell that awoke all the echoes of the hills.

It was his last yell as an Indian, as in a few minutes more he passed out of sight of the Elk and the warriors, never to see them more.

A week later they were on the train speeding for St. Louis. The young chief had donned a suit of clothes more in keeping with his surroundings, and Laura and Lena had arrayed Singing Bird out like themselves.

At St. Louis Eric Winston had no trouble in taking possession of the property given him by the papers of Ethan Wilkes. But a week was required to finish the business, and then they went to Washington. There Little Red Cloud saw the President, and had a long talk with him about the redmen of the West.

That attended to they came back to Missouri, and on the banks of that great river bought farms side by side, and settled down to the peaceful life of farmers.

Then Eric Winston claimed Lena's hand and she gave it to him, for she had learned to love him. Will Harper asked Laura to be his wife, and she consented. Then Swift Foot, as they all continued to call him, found a Missouri girl to have him, and thus the four started out happily paired to enjoy the sunset of life in peace and plenty.

Next week's issue will contain "NOBODY'S SON; or, THE STRANGE FORTUNES OF A SMART BOY."

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A LUCKY LAD

—or—

THE FORTUNE OF TOM WESLEY

By R. T. BENNETT

(A Serial Story)

CHAPTER XVIII.

Where Tom Struck It Rich.

"Well, for heaven's sake, don't get my boy into playing cards and horse-racing."

"I certainly will not. I don't believe Tom knows one card from another."

A few days later Tom employed Contractor Jones to add another ten rooms to his mother's house, and said:

"Mother, you will soon have a hotel of your own, and we'll call it the Wesley House. Every dollar of its cost will be paid as soon as it is finished."

The contractor put enough men at work to rush it through and complete the addition before the cold weather.

Tom was now eighteen years of age, and all the native girls around Hadley began treating him with much consideration and cordiality; but although he was polite and civil to every one of them, still he showed no particular attention to any one of them.

The end of the season came, and all the city boarders left Hadley; but Tom's horse-trading and other speculating successes went on, and many of his friends inquired about his lucky dime.

"Oh, my lucky dime is all right," said Tom, and several of his friends bantered him about buying it.

He laughed with them and told them that he wouldn't think of selling his birthright.

"Who in thunder wants to buy your birthright?" one of them asked.

"Why, do you?" he retorted.

"Not on your life," said the other fellow.

"Well, I consider it my birthright, for it was coined in the year in which I was born and came to me by the hand of fortune, so I'm going to hold onto it until my fortune is made. It would do you no good to buy it, for you were a stout lad when that dime was coined."

He refused so many who wanted to see the coin that the charge was made that he had lost it; but his mother spoke up and said that was not true, as he still had it, although he was not showing it to everybody.

Contractor Jones rushed his men and finished the house, just as he had completed the first addition he put up, before the cold weather set in, and during the time that the addition was being built Tom continued to make trades, and, of course, his good luck continued, for during the winter he bought a dozen Jersey cows and several acres of land, which he enclosed, and built barns for their use on the tract.

He then hired an experienced dairyman to at-

tend to them, and they had milk and butter for sale in the greatest abundance.

The tract of land which he had bought was just outside of the village. There was a bold spring on the place, and he sowed fine grass for their maintenance. He would buy no cows unless it was a splendid Jersey. All other kinds he turned away.

Every boarding-house in the town wanted to buy their milk and butter, and he kept an eye on the dairy and the dairyman.

His mother no longer did her own milking. The dairyman drove up to the house every morning and afternoon with butter and milk from Tom's dairy. Many mothers in the village were using him as a pattern for their own boys.

When the hotel season opened the next spring, Tom's mother was at the head of a twenty-room house, every room of which was taken by wealthy people who came up to spend the season there.

One day Tom was looking around to buy some additional land just beyond the one he had already purchased for his dairy lot, and found a spring which he had known all his life, not a very bold one, but one in which the water tasted very queer, and he didn't know whether it was good for cows or not, so he made up his mind to take a sample of it down to the drug store and ask the druggist if he could tell him what it was in the water that caused it to taste so different from that found in other springs and wells, and the druggist, after tasting it, asked him where he got it.

"Never mind about that," said Tom. "I want to know if it is good for milch-cows to drink."

"Well, before I could answer that question, Tom, I would have to have it analyzed, and that would cost about a hundred dollars. I can tell you, though, that it is mineral, containing both sulphur and iron."

"Are you sure of that?" Tom asked.

"Yes, I'm sure of it."

Upon hearing that Tom went to the owner of the land and bought it, some fifteen acres in extent. Then he went to the druggist and told him to have the water analyzed and he would pay the bill, so the druggist sent samples of the water to a well-known chemist who, after analyzing it, pronounced it to be about the best mineral water in the state.

"By George," said he to himself, "I've struck it rich."

The druggist had told many of his customers that Tom had found a little mineral spring not far from the village, and the man from whom he had bought the land immediately told where the spring was.

It created a great deal of excitement, for everybody expected the little village to become a great watering place, and the man refused to sell Tom any more of the land at any price; but Tom had the spring.

He had it cleaned out and walled up, and then he built a neat little house over it.

People flocked there to drink the water, with the result that during the next season the place was more crowded than ever before. So popular did the spring become that capitalists came up and made various offers to buy it, but Tom shook his head to them and held onto the spring.

Finally many of the wealthy men of the locality came to Tom and his mother, saying that Tom

was standing in the way of the growth of the village, and claiming that if he would sell the spring to a company that the company would put up buildings on the grounds and erect more hotels, thus increasing the value of every citizen's property holdings more than double, and his mother then urged him to sell it.

"I won't do it, mother, but I will lease the spring to any company that will offer a fair price for it, and thus you and I and sister will get rich as the town grows."

After considerable negotiation a company was organized and the value of stock placed at a high figure.

Tom was to be given one hundred thousand dollars' worth of stock for the use of the spring, and the company was to put up all the necessary buildings.

Tom, however, was to move his dairy a half mile further away, and the company was to use that land as a park.

The water was to be free for everybody spending the season up there, and was also to be bottled and shipped all over the country, while Tom was, of course, to receive a certain income from the sale of the water, and still retain his title as the owner of the land.

Thus, at the age of eighteen, Tom Wesley had become the wealthiest individual in the town of Hadley.

Eight acres of the land was to remain as his individual property, upon which he could build cottages and rent them for whatever price he could get for them.

The company at once set carpenters at work building neat little cottages near the spring. Then they started another hotel, very large and commodious, on a part of the land that the spring was on.

As fast as the cottages were finished they were taken by the tenants who wanted to use the water of the spring, and, of course, property all over the village more than doubled in value, while work went on, too.

Tom's mother had another addition built to her house, and when it was finished the house had forty rooms.

Miss Granger came up very late in the season. Tom had insisted that the room she had occupied the season before should be held in reserve for her, and his mother had long since ceased to oppose his wishes in anything. When Miss Granger arrived, Tom, with his rig, was down at the station, and, of course, drove her up to the house.

"Oh, my, Tom," said she, "you seem to have waked up the whole village."

"Yes, so I have."

"Tom, what are you going to call that spring?"

"Why, I wanted to call it after a certain young lady, but the parties who have leased it and are building cottages and a big hotel on the land insist upon calling it the Wesley Spring."

"Oh, Tom, I'm glad of that. What did you want to call it?"

"I wanted to call it the Granger Spring, but they wouldn't have it."

Her face flushed, but she said nothing.

She understood only too well his motive in giving it that name, and she appreciated it.

"Tom, how is it that you hadn't discovered that spring before?"

"Oh, I knew all about it ever since I was old enough to run about, but I never dreamed of its

value. A little toddler, you know, can't begin to understand such things; but when I moved the dairy over there near it, the thought struck me that the queer tasting water would probably spoil the cow's milk, so I took a bottle of it down to the druggist, who told me that it was some kind of mineral water. I suspected then that it was valuable, so I had a bottle of it sent to the State chemist in the city and then went and bought the balance of the tract of land. When old man Fleming found out how I had gotten ahead of him he was very angry, and said some things that, had the members of his church heard, would have expelled him; but I had the land, and so left the big words that he used to him."

"Tom, has your mother got room for me in the house?"

"Bless you, yes. Your some old room is ready for you. I wouldn't let mother put anybody else in there."

"Oh, you dear Tom. I am so glad of that, for I didn't want to go back to the hotel."

When she entered the house Mrs. Wesley caught Evelyn in her arms and kissed her all over her face.

When she went up to her room she found a large pitcher of water, fresh from the spring, on a table, and Tom's mother informed her that Tom had brought it up from the spring especially for her.

"And," she added, "he says that he will see that you get a pitcher of it, fresh from the spring every morning."

"Just what I need," said she. "I have been ailing for the last two months, which is the reason why I am so late in coming up. Tom is certainly thoughtful, and I appreciate it."

"Yes, he has been bringing a pitcher of the water up to my room ever since he had the water analyzed. He has always been thoughtful of his mother and sister."

"Tom went down to the city and procured one of the best cooks he could find, saying that his mother should not go into the kitchen again to cook a meal for the boarders," she told Evelyn later.

"Mrs. Wesley," said Evelyn, "the girl who gets Tom for a husband will be the luckiest girl in all this State, and if you do not object to me as a daughter I am going to set my cap for him."

"Dear, of all the girls that I know, I would rather have you for my son's wife, and I don't think that you would have any trouble about it whatever, for I am satisfied that he loves you very dearly. There are nearly a dozen girls in this village who are doing their best to capture him."

"Oh, my! Then I will have to be in a hurry to get ahead of the others."

Just then Evelyn's trunks came up in the express wagon, and the conversation was interrupted.

Late that afternoon Tom asked her if she would like to ride out with him.

"Yes, Tom, very much. Have you got these same bays yet?"

"Yes; I couldn't make up my mind to sell them because they travel so well together, and are so spirited and, at the same time, so gentle."

During their ride they went around by the spring, where Tom stopped, got out and brought her a glass of water.

(To be continued.)

PLUCK AND LUCK

NEW YORK, MARCH 2, 1927

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INTERESTING ARTICLES

ALBINO RATS

If the behavior of rats is any criterion there's no such thing as building up alcohol resistance by an ancestry of hard drinkers. Frank B. Hanson and Florence Heys of Washington University at St. Louis described a lot of hard drinking Albino rats that had been on a drunk for ten generations, yet the sons and daughters of the tenth generation reeled and staggered in their cups as quickly as had the dead and gone first ancestors.

WEATHER IN MARS

How's the weather on Mars? Not so bad, according to the estimate of W. W. Coblentz and C. O. Lampland of the Bureau of Standards at Washington, who reported their radiometric measurements before the American Physical Society.

They figure that when the southern end of Mars is tilted toward the sun, making it summer for the Southern Hemisphere, the temperature in the southern temperate zone is about 77 degrees by our Fahrenheit thermometer. At the same time the North Polar temperature stands at about 40 degrees below zero.

CARRIER PIGEON, HERO IN WORLD WAR, DIES

One of the feathered heroes of the great war—a carrier pigeon, which helped save Verdun—has recently died of old age in Paris. The bird had a wound stripe on its leg band and was one of the government's pensioners, having been given a home by a grateful nation.

Through a barrage of shrapnel the pigeon in 1916 carried a message that kept Froideterre Hill from being captured. In an order of the day the army cited the pigeon for "having maintained communication with the front line when all human means failed." In its flight through the barrage the pigeon was hit by a shell splinter that carried away its claws. The pigeon will be mounted and placed in the Verdun war museum.

NEW SERUM FOR RHEUMATIC FEVER

Public announcement was authorized recently in Philadelphia, Pa., that a new serum for the

treatment of rheumatic fever has been developed by Dr. James C. Small, chief bacteriologist of the Philadelphia General Hospital.

Doctor Small has for many years been conducting experiments with a view to isolating the specific organism of this disease from the blood of patients.

"We wish to emphasize," said Health Director Krusen, "that it is a result of a preliminary study of acute rheumatic fever, in which the specific organism of this disease has been isolated from the blood of patients. Using this organism, an anti-toxin has been developed which so far has given very encouraging results in the treatment of rheumatic fever, with the possibilities of further perfection for general distribution.

"We are making only modest claims as to the value of this new serum, because it is still in the experimental stage, and too small a number of cures has been effected to evaluate properly its ultimate efficacy."

LAUGHS

ABSENCE AGAIN

Absence makes the pocketbook fatter.

—U. of S. Calif. Wampus.

DISPASSIONATE CRITICISM

Lady (more or less): Doesn't that little boy swear terribly?

Another Little Boy: Yes'm, he sure do. He don't put no expression in it at all.

—Cornell Window.

He: Suppose I had never met you!

She: A good idea! Let's suppose you haven't.

—Wisconsin Octopus.

TIDINGS FROM THE BEACH

"Who is this fellow Tide I hear about so much?"

"I never heard of him."

"Why, I've heard everyone saying, 'Hi, Tide,' and 'Lo, Tide.'"

—Washington Dirge.

PRIVILEGED

"Hey, mister! Yer engine's smokin'."

"Well, it's old enough to."

—Texas Ranger.

RENDEZVOUS

She: Meet me at the library tonight at 7:00 o'clock."

It: All right; what time will you be there.

—Minn. Ski-U-Mah.

HE NEEDED IT.

Inquisitive Lady: And now, officer, tell me what that strap under your chin is for.

Officer: That, lady, is to rest my poor old jaw when it gets tired answering silly questions.

—Scream.

ALSO TIRED

"Is that water warm?"

"It ought to be; it's been running half an hour."

—Oregon Orange Owl.

PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN SEA

It was in those exciting days when the country was in the throes of war with Mexico. No unimportant part it was which the navy had to play in that contest.

Though Mexican war vessels were few, yet there were plenty of freebooters and itinerant coasters along the Central American coast only too ready to enlist as privateers, and prey on the commerce of the United States.

It was finally decided to send a warship to patrol the Bay of Honduras and other parts of the Caribbean Sea.

The vessel selected for this purpose was the clipper-built ship, War Eagle, Captain Lester Worden in command.

Captain Worden decided to stop a while at Belize, for the purpose of gaining information. When Captain Worden went ashore with his boat's crew he was warmly welcomed by the British commandant, who extended to him a cordial hospitality.

Captain Worden was an astute man, and did not at once venture to make the inquiries which were his object in landing there. After hobnobbing with Colonel Archibald, the commandant, he ventured to remark, carelessly:

"I have heard of some piracy along your coast. Is it irremediable?"

"Ah, my dear sir," said Colonel Archibald, deprecatingly, "I regret that it is so. But there is little here compared with the piracy of the Caribbean Sea. Indeed, there is one wretch who boldly preys upon the commerce of your country under the guise of a privateer. He is a literal fiend, and, I believe, exemplifies the saying, 'dead men tell no tales.'"

"What may be the name of this pirate?"

"He is known only as Red Muriel, on account of his appearance. Though of a dark-skinned race, he has hair and mustache of a peculiar bright red."

Captain Worden returned to his ship, but before he had been in port many days he learned other important facts, among them the locality most frequented by Red Muriel.

The pirate ship was bark rigged and a swift sailor. A good armament was carried and a large crew. The usual plan was to run down a merchantman, lay alongside with grapple-irons, carry the fight on to the victim's deck, and then, after killing everybody on board, to loot and scuttle the ship.

A member of the War Eagle's crew who seemed to be more than ordinarily interested in the pirate was a young midddy, named Ralph Hayden. He was a tall, handsome fellow, popular with all, and a thorough gentleman. As Captain Worden came back from the commandant with the story of Red Muriel, Ralph was more interested than any one else. He seemed to be the victim of a powerful emotion.

"This Red Muriel would attack any ship flying the American flag on sight?" he asked of Captain Worden.

"Yes," replied the captain.

"And his game is to kill everybody on board and sink the ship?"

"Exactly!"

"He must be a demon!"

"He certainly is, and it must be our work to run him down."

"Then the sooner it is done, the better!" cried Ralph, forcibly. "Let us lose no time, Captain Worden."

Among Ralph Hayden's warm friends on board were two apprentices, Royal May and David Jeffreys. To them, in the privacy of a corner of the gun deck, Ralph imparted the thrilling reasons for his interest in the running down of Red Muriel.

"My father, Harold Hayden, of New York, is a civil engineer and surveyor. Two years ago my mother died. My father wished me to join my fortunes with his. But I had just entered the navy, and could not honorably secure a discharge just then.

"I went to sea and my father, about this time, hit upon a startling surprise and one which, if successful, promised great reward. It seemed that a distinguished traveler, named Samuel Dean, had learned of the existence of buried treasure in the heart of a forest in Nicaragua. Millions were there, awaiting only the skill of some one versed in the ways of the country and surveying to recover them.

"In his dilemma, after an unsuccessful attempt to recover the treasure, Dean came to my father. They at once came to an agreement, and my father agreed to go with Dean and do the surveying for a share in the treasure. But it was necessary to have a ship to carry out the plan, so my father wrote me, asking me to leave my post and join them. I was to be made captain of the treasure ship. I obtained leave of absence to visit my father and Mr. Dean in New York, and consult with them. They were greatly disappointed at my inability to go with them. However, I succeeded in finding a trustworthy shipmaster, named Captain Warlock, who owned the ship Adventurer, and he was enlisted in the cause. The Adventurer was fitted out and started upon her cruise. A point on the Mosquito Coast, near the Pearl Cays, was to be the landing place.

"While at the house of Mr. Dean I met my fate. Alice Dean is the sweetest girl on earth. I mean to win her for my wife, if such a thing is possible. But enough of that. While we were at Havana last week I got another letter from my father."

The two apprentices were now very much interested in Ralph's story.

"Has he found the treasure, Ralph?" asked young Jeffreys.

"Maybe they've started for home!" said Royal. Ralph nodded.

"Yes," he said, "they found the treasure, and it is on the Adventurer, and she is somewhere in these seas, on her way home."

"Jupiter!" exclaimed Jeffreys. "You don't mean it, Ralph!"

"Of course your father will look out for you!" exclaimed Royal.

"Won't you be rich!"

"Lucky fellow!"

"Don't forget your old pards aboard the War Eagle."

"There is no danger of that," said Ralph, with tears in his eyes. When the war is over I shall

resign, and then we will all go into the shipping business together. What say you?"

"Hurrah!" shouted the excited apprentices.

"But just now I am in a state of desperate excitement," said Ralph. "Alice is on board the Adventurer, as well as the treasure. The ship will, of course, fly the American flag, and if this piratical scoundrel, Red Muriel, should come across her—good heavens! I cannot bear to think of it!"

It is needless to say that the two apprentices were keyed up to the highest pitch of excitement and interest. So it happened there was more than a common interest in the chase as the War Eagle plowed the waters of the Caribbean Sea in quest of the pirate.

Days passed, and many ships of all nations were spoken, but none of them reported having seen Red Muriel. But one day the lookout spied a floating wreck on the horizon. The War Eagle bore down toward it. The vessel was a full-rigged ship, with a number of shot holes in her hull, and waterlogged.

As the vessel's stern swung about, Ralph read the name:

"Adventurer, New York."

He nearly fainted, and one of the oarsmen in the boat sent to board the wreck had to relieve him at the tiller.

"My heavens!" he groaned, "the worst has happened!"

Stepping upon the deck of the floating wreck, it was easy to see the work of the pirate. Rotting bodies of seamen lay about, where they had been cut down by the pirates. Evidently a desperate battle had taken place.

But though the vessel was searched, he found no trace of the bodies of his father, Mr. Dean, nor Alice. Something like a thrill of hope revived in his bosom.

"To Whomsoever May Chance to Board This Wreck:

"Greeting.—We are in the power of Red Muriel, the Merciless. There is little hope for us that our lives may be spared; yet one thing alone may do it. The villain has confiscated our treasure, recovered from the ancient ruins in Nicaragua. He has demanded to know the spot where we found it, and promises us our lives if we will show him. I have little faith in his word; yet, should this reach the eye of a would-be rescuer, I pray you, in the name of Heaven! sail at once for the Pearl Cays and look for Muriel's ship. May Heaven favor us!"

"Harold Hayden."

A wild cry of hope and joy escaped Ralph's lips. "The villain has spared their lives upon that condition!" he cried wildly. "Now for the Pearl Cays with all haste. Heaven help us!"

Back to the War Eagle went the young midgy. Of course, Captain Worden listened with great interest to his story. Straight for Pearl Cays the course was laid.

Two days later, after a swift passage, they were in that vicinity. Suddenly the lookout shouted:

"Sail ho!"

"Where away?" shouted Captain Worden.

"Dead ahead, and bearing to windward."

Captain Worden brought his glass to bear upon the distant vessel. He saw she was bark rigged.

Suddenly her flag, which could not be seen as to color at that distance, was pulled down and another sent up. At once the captain's suspicions were aroused.

Chase was given. The bark was overhauled, and a shot across her bow brought her to.

There seemed to be much confusion on her decks and the hasty closing of ports. Captain Worden at once ordered out the longboat. Twelve seamen and Ralph Hayden, the midgy, and the two apprentices, Royal May and David Jeffreys, accompanied them. Straight for the bark went the boat.

"What think you of those deep seams in her side?" asked Captain Worden, turning to Ralph.

"They look like disguised gun ports."

"We shall see," said the captain.

The longboat ran alongside the bark. A man at the rail asked in Spanish:

"What want you, senor?"

"We want to come aboard," replied Captain Worden.

"We are a Spanish trader, and not at war with your country."

"I want to see your captain. Lower your gangway."

Leaving two men in the boat, the captain and the rest of the crew climbed to the deck of the vessel. The captain of the bark now approached them.

He was a tall, swarthy fellow, wearing topboots and a serape, with a tasseled cap on his head. His red mustache and hair at once convinced his visitors that he was Red Muriel.

"Well, senor, what can a poor trader do for you?"

"Red Muriel," said Captain Worden, "concealment is useless. I demand your surrender."

At a signal from the pirate chief two score wild and savage-looking men, armed to the teeth, appeared.

"No, senor captain, you are in the lion's den!" cried the pirate chief. "Surrender or Red Muriel will kill you!"

"Never!" cried Captain Worden. "The least hostile move on your part, and you and your crew are swept into eternity! Look!"

He made a gesture toward the War Eagle. In the shrouds were half a hundred expert riflemen, their guns covering the pirate and his gang. For a moment Red Muriel's face paled, then he made a pass at Worden with his sword, crying:

"Have at you, capitaine! Red Muriel dies, but never surrenders!"

The pirate crew came forward like wolves. But Ralph gave the signal, there was a crash of firearms, and Red Muriel and a dozen of his men fell. The others retreated into the cabin. For some time a desultory battle between decks followed, the pirates being driven from one part of the ship to the other. But at last they were forced to surrender, and were taken aboard the War Eagle in irons.

Harold Hayden, Samuel Dean and his daughter Alice, were found locked up in one of the cabins. The stolen treasure was found in the hold and transferred to the warship.

A month later the War Eagle, with her prize in tow, put in at Norfolk. A large fortune was realized from the treasure, and at the close of the war.

CURRENT NEWS

JIU-JITSU TAUGHT ENGLISH WOMEN

Women in Manchester, England have taken up jiu-jitsu. Several classes have been organized where the Japanese science is taught women and girls to make them better able to look after themselves when out late at night.

LANDING WITH POCKET-SIZE PARACHUTE

A pocket-size parachute has been invented by Lieut. Freri of the Italian aviation forces in Genoa. At a recent test exhibition the Lieutenant jumped from an airplane at a height of 1,200 feet, and with his parachute succeeded in landing smoothly.

BAREFOOT SLEEPWALKER FOUND WADING SNOW

Through many inches of snow, with a biting wind prevailing, a woman walked three blocks from her home in the north end of Winnipeg clad only in her night attire.

She was a "sleep-walker," but it was the first time she had ever left her house, she told a constable who accosted her, awoke her from her trance and returned her to her warm home.

BRAIN ABSCESS CAUSED BY NEEDLE

Alvin Volderbing of Reinbeck has no headache to-day for the first time in twelve years. He blew his nose Sunday and found a half-inch piece of needle in his handkerchief.

Twelve years ago, when a soldier in the Philippines, Volderbing was kicked in the head by a horse. A surgeon operated and presumably left part of a needle in the man's head. Recently physicians diagnosed his affliction as brain abscess and forecast his early death.

WASHINGTON FARMER HAS NATURAL ICE BOX

Near Husum, Washington, a natural-ice cave serves as a cold-storage warehouse for fruit, meat and vegetables, accommodating not only the supplies of its owner, T. E. Ober, but of the neighbors as well. In fact, the unused space is so large that it could conveniently hold the products of a whole county.

This ice cave, one of several in the Trout Lake region of Klickitat County, is one of the many natural wonders of Mount Adams. Ober's cave has a commodious entrance, and for a distance of several hundred feet an average temperature of forty degrees is keenly perceptible. A strong breeze of cold air constantly blows, and farther into the darkness are the ice rooms and the freezing cold. The ceiling is hung with long columns of ice, which in summer drip to the floor. Explorations have failed to yield any other opening to the cave but the one employed by Ober as an entrance. The rooms gradually recede and apparently join part of a glacier coming down from Mount Adams.

FORMATIVE YEARS OF YOUTH

The first five years of a child's life go farther toward determining the mental condition of the adult than any equal length of time between the ages of five and twenty-four. This is the assertion of Prof. Arnold Gesell, director of the Psycho-Clinic at Yale, New Haven, Conn., where a new child movement has been instituted.

Doctor Gesell, professor of child hygiene at Yale, and author of books on child life, recently told of experimental work in his clinic. He showed with the help of moving pictures the reactions of children at ten different age levels to various tests, using the reaction of a child to a red block for his test.

"At the age of one month," he said, "the child does not heed the block. At three months he gives slight attention to it. At six months he takes hold of it. At nine months he is able to give attention sufficiently long to take hold of two blocks. At twelve months, with two blocks in his hands, he will endeavor to take hold of a third with his teeth. At eighteen he is able to erect a column of several blocks. At two years he can take three blocks and make a bridge. At three, four and five years of age he is able to do tasks requiring greater skill and concentration with the blocks.

"By taking a number of children in this way and discovering what most children are able to do at a given age, it is possible to lay down rules as to what a normal child's reaction is," Doctor Gesell said. "And when we have these rules, we are able, by testing children in the light of them, to discover whether or not a child is normal, above normal, or sub-normal."

PUEBLO INDIANS KNEW THE USE OF SURGERY

That the Pueblo Indians of the Stone Age had surgeons who knew the use of splints and had attained to a certain surgical skill in setting fractured bones is attested by the skeleton of a young Aztec girl unearthed by the New York Museum of Natural History in New Mexico. This skeleton, now on exhibition at the museum, makes an interesting exhibit of this prehistoric Pueblo surgery. The girl, apparently from twelve to fifteen years of age, suffered a serious accident and died from the effects, although the condition of the skeleton attests the efforts of the surgeons to save her life.

The left hip had been badly fractured, and a portion of it had been broken away, around it were other breaks and dislocations. The treatment of the most serious injuries was evidently beyond the skill of the surgeons, but the left forearm, which showed two breaks and extreme dislocation, had been set by them. When the skeleton was found at least six splints surrounded the broken arm. The splints were of wood, and they averaged seven inches in length, half an inch in width, and three tenths of an inch in thickness, being flat on the under side and rounded on the upper. The bandages had entirely rotted away, but the remains showed that they had been adjusted in consonance with modern surgical methods.

TIMELY TOPICS

NEW TYPE OF SPEAKERS

Radio loud speakers of concrete are the latest type. A local inventor, after studying the echo capacity of concrete construction, evolved a speaker which he claims eliminates all distortion.

BLINDFOLD COW KILLED

An automobile owner, whose machine killed a cow recently won an award of \$188 for damages to his automobile. The cow had wandered onto the highway blindfolded.

The jury held to the opinion that a cow with a burlap blindfold over its head has no legal right on a State highway.

The suit was brought by William M. Tucker of Standish against Edward O. Brown of Vassalboro, owner of the cow.

AWAY ON BUSINESS

A few years ago when a boy played hookey from school he usually was expected to be found skating on a neighboring pond or, at the worst, hunting rabbits with an air rifle. But today youths are of a more adventurous nature.

At least Lawrence Koons, fourteen, is, for while Lawrence's Des Moines (Ia.) teacher was marking him absent from his junior high school classes the other day, Lawrence was making a trip to Omaha and back in an airplane alone. He made the round trip of 300 miles in three hours.

He took his teacher a note the following day to the effect that he had been away "on business."

CAR RESTORED AFTER BEING SOLD PIECEMEAL

A seven-passenger limousine stolen some time ago, dismantled and sold piecemeal by thieves to three different junk dealers, has been restored to the owner in running condition by the Berlin police. All it needs is a coat of paint.

More than a dozen policemen and detectives worked on the case off and on. Armed with the numbers of all parts of the stolen car, which is owned by a wealthy industrialist, the police gathered them in bit by bit until the police garage mechanics were able to restore the car as it was when stolen.

They found the motor in a second-hand accessory shop four months after the theft was reported. The chassis was found in a junk yard. The owner was satisfied to take back that much of the car, but the police assured him it would pay to wait. Two weeks ago they found the body in another junk yard, and a few days later a cop rang the doorbell of the industrialist's home to tell him that his lost automobile was waiting outside.

CATS SCORN MICE

While millions of mice are confined by strategic trenches in an area nine by twelve miles in the vicinity of the dry Buena Vista Lake, hundreds of letters are being received in Bakersfield, Calif., advising methods of extermination.

Mercer County has offered to recruit an army of cats and ship them to Kern County. Cats in the infested district, however, are observed to be

absolutely indifferent to the rodents. One farmer reported to the Commissioner's office here that sixteen mice had taken shelter with a litter of kittens for warmth and that the mother cat had adopted them.

Matthew McCurry, an official of the S. P. C. A. at San Francisco, advises use of country bred cats. City cats, he says, do not know how to forage and would do no good. Another adviser suggests essence of peppermint and makes the comment: "The mice simply cannot stand it and will leave."

Because strychnine is used in poisoning the wheat used in the tranches and is a stimulant as well as a poison, the mice, just before they die, appear intoxicated into displays of befuddled energy.

EX-CONVICTS ON PAROLE

As proof that former convicts, restored to liberty on parole, can and do turn their talents to money making in a legitimate way, State Parole Officer Ed W. Whyte announced that California paroled men have earned a total of \$12,581,681.69 since the parole law was enacted in 1898.

His report, filed with Governor Richardson, states further that these men have managed to save \$3,151,221.65 over the same period.

According to Whyte's report, only 19 per cent. have violated their paroles and only 6 per cent. have committed new crimes.

Whyte's statistics on the current parole situation show 2,043 men at liberty under jurisdiction of the State Board of Prison Directors and only fifty-one of them out of employment.

TELEPATHIST ASTOUNDS CHICAGO INTELLIGENTSIA

A swarthy Egyptian telepathist has the Chicago intelligentsia figuratively standing on its head. He looked into their brains and told them what they were thinking about at that particular moment. The seance was in the home of Julius Rosenwald.

Ascoudar Kaldah Bey is the mind reader. Among Mr. Rosenwald's guests were President Emeritus Harry Pratt Judson of the University of Chicago; Harold H. Swift, Prof. James H. Breasted, famous Egyptologist; Lessing Rosenthal, Dr. Louis Mann of Sinai Temple; Dr. M. L. Goodkind and Prof. Theodore G. Soares and Prof. Shaller Mathews of the Divinity School of the University of Chicago.

"Kaldah's feats ranged from those familiar in telepathy to others for which there are only two or three precedents in the history of mental science," said Edward Lasker, chess wizard. "These ranged from grasping Mr. Rosenwald's hand and stating correctly his mother's maiden name to repeating word for word a sentence in Arabic written by Professor Breasted."

"When Doctor Goodkind had in mind the medical term of a rare disease which would occupy about three or four lines in print, the Egyptian gave it correctly."

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